

Suladis and Ugabhogas
of Karnataka Music.

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Suladis And Ugabhogas of
Karnataka Music

Prof. R. Sathyanarayana
of Mysore Brothers

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SCHEME OF TRANSLATION

The Samskrta alphabet has been transliterated according to the following scheme :

a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṛī e ai o au m ḥ

k kh g gh ṇ

c ch j jh ñ

ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ

t th d dh n

p ph b bh m

y r l v ś sh s h ḷ ksh

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THE SULĀDIS AND UGĀBHOGAS OF KARNĀTAKA MUSIC

I. INTRODUCTION

Karnataka music is as unique in form as in content in the galaxy of world music. Its achievements in the realms of acoustical and aesthetic theory, technique, instrumentation, composition as well as in research are great and glorious. The compositional patterns characterizing this music, past and present, are studied in their technique, endless in variety, heart-warming in their content and soul-satisfying in their beauty. They span the entire gamut of human experience, from the erotic to the ethical, from the mundane to the mystic. They are unique in their sublimation of each musical expression of experience into devotion and divinity.

The following is an attempt to elucidate two such forms of Karnataka music : the sulādi and the ugābhoga. A brief background of the technology of compositions in Indian music will be useful in placing them in a historical perspective. Musical composition of any and all types has been denoted in India under the generic name of *prabandha* (lit. knit together, essay), until about the 13th century A.D., when Gopālanāyaka of Karnataka distinguished the *prabandha* from the *gīta* in his definition of the term *caturdaṇḍī*. In spite of this distinction, the

1. Gopālanāyaka, *cit.*, Venkaṭamakhi, *Caturdaṇḍīprakāśika* IX, 5, p. 75. Venkaṭamakhi restricts the term *gīta* to the seven *sāṅga sūdas* (*vide infra*). It is not clear whether he derives this equation from Gopālanāyaka.

term *prabandha* appears to have retained its generic connotation in our musical literature. The *prabandha* has been defined by our early writers through its general physical analysis. It contains four melodic organs or *avayava*: *udgrāha*, the commencement; *dhruva*, the body of the song; *melāpaka*, a bridge between these two; *ābhoga*, the conclusion. An optional fifth organ, called the *antarā*, spanned the *dhruva* and the *ābhoga* and was exclusively used in a special group of songs called the *sālaga sūdas*. The *prabandha* consists of six elements or *dhātus*: *svara*, solfa passages; *biruda*, signature of the composer, name of the composition or of patron, etc.; *pada*, words; *tena*, the syllables *te* and *na* signifying auspiciousness; *pāṭa*, vocalised sounds of the percussive and other musical instruments; *tāla*, cyclic time measure². The *prabandha* has been divided into *sūda*, *ālikrama* and *viprakīrṇa*. The *sūda* has been further divided into *śuddha* and *chāyāla*, the latter term having phonetically deteriorated into *sālaga*. The eight compositional varieties called *ēla*, *karāṇa*, *ḍheṅkī*, *vartanī*, *jhombaḍa*, *lambhaka*, *rāsa* and *ekatālī* are *sūdas* while twentyfour others, such as the *varṇa*, *varṇasvara* etc. are *ālikramas*; several unclassified compositions are grouped under the *viprakīrṇa*³. The *śuddha sūdas* strictly conformed to their theoretical prescription or approximated to it as nearly as was practicable and were sung only in *jātis*, *grāma rāgas* and their derived archaic *rāgas*. The *sālaga sūdas*, on the other hand, were a distinct group of

2. Sārṅgadeva, *Saṅgītaratnākara*, IV, 7-9; 12-19.

3. *Ibid.*, IV, 23-33 *et seq.*

special compositions that were restricted to localized usage⁴.

The *sālaga sūdas* have evolved into the *sulādis*.

II. ANTIQUITY

The *sālaga sūda prabandhas* rank among the most ancient, yet sophisticated musical forms of India. Bharata mentions and describes them:

ಶುದ್ಧ ಶ್ಲಾಘಾಂಶೋಽತಿ ದ್ವಿವಿಧಃ ಸೂಡ ಶುಚ್ಯತೇ |
ವಿಲಾಡಿಃ ಶುದ್ಧ ಇತ್ಯುಕ್ತೋ ಧ್ರುವಾದಿಃ ಸಾಲಗೋ ಮತಃ |⁵

Kṛṣṇadāsa (c 1600 A.D.) ascribes the following passage Dattila (c 200 B.C. to 200 A.D.):⁶

ಕಾಲಾಃ ಸಂಚಾರಿಕಾ ಯತ್ರ ಪಾಟಾದಿ ರಹಿತಾ ಯದಿ |
ಆದ್ಯಂತಯೋಃ ಪಾಟವೇತು ಯುಕ್ತಾಸ್ತಾ ಲಾ ಯದ್ವಕ್ಷಯಾ |
ಸೂಡ ಮಧ್ಯ ಪ್ರಬಂಧೋಽಯಂ ಪ್ರಾತೋ ದತ್ತಿಲಸಮ್ಮತಃ |⁷

It is interesting to note that Mataṅga (c 5th century A.D.) mentions the *elā*, *karāṇa*, *ḍheṅkī*, *vartanī*, *jhombaḍa* and the *ekatālī*⁸ but does not use the term *sūda* for these.

4. *Ibid.*, IV, 311-324 *et seq.*

5. Bharata, *cit.* Tulaja, *Saṅgītasārāṃṛta*, XII, p. 144. Cf. *Siṃhabhūpāla*, *Saṅgītasudhānidhi*, *commentary on Saṅgītaratnākara*, IV, 313-314, p. 335. The passage cited is not found in the extant *impressi typis* of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

6. Kṛṣṇadāsa, *Gītaprakāśa*, *extr.* Ramakrishna Kavi, *Bharata-kośa*, p. 797.

7. This passage is not found in the available edition of Dattila, which is, however, an admitted condensation or abridgement of a larger work: Dattila, pp. 1, 23-24.

8. Mataṅga, *Bṛhaddeśī*, pp. 142 *et seq.*

He does not also mention the *sāлага sūḍas*. Nevertheless, these latter must have been well known and practised in India and especially in Karnataka since very early times since they are described by Someśvara (c 1130 A.D.)⁹, Haripāla (c 1175 A.D.)¹⁰, Pārśvadeva (c 1200 A.D.)¹¹, and other writers before Sārṅgadeva. Pārśvadeva names the *śuddha sūḍas* as *jaghanya sūḍas*; he has derived this nomenclature from Jagadekamalla¹². The corrupt and incomplete text of *Mānasollāsa* and of *Saṅgīta-samayāsāra* contain the *sāлага sūḍas* in random order and with lacunae. Thus Sārṅgadeva may be said to be the first to present these systematically in a theoretical context. As usual, he has summarised earlier data on definitions and views in an eclectic and compact manner. For more than three hundred years his descriptions and definitions were borrowed almost universally by later authors, though, as will be shown, these songs were continuously moulting into a nearly metamorphic ultimate form during this period.

III. ETYMOLOGY

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding a history of some two thousand years, the term *sūḍa* has been left

9. Someśvara, *Mānasollāsa*, XVI. 4, pp. 59, 69 etc

10. Haripāla., *Saṅgītasudhākara*, *extr.* Mummaḍi Cikka-bhūpāla, *Abhinava Bharata-saṅgraha*, p. 322.

11. Pārśvadeva, *Saṅgītasamayāsāra*, pp. 28-40.

12. Jagadekamalla, *Saṅgīta-cūdāmaṇi*, Manuscript in the Manuscripts Library of Sri Varalakshmi Academics of Fine Arts, Mysore.

unexplained and underived by all our authors on music. It is Kallinātha (c 1440 A.D.) who gives a clue to its origin :

ಸೂಡ ಇತಿ ನಿಶ್ಚಯಶೇಷಸಮೂಹವಾಚೀ ದೇಶೀ ಶಬ್ದಃ¹³

This is followed by Venkaṭamakhi (c 1650 A.D.) :

ಸೂಡ ಇತ್ಯೇಷ ದೇಶೀಯಶಬ್ದೋ ನಿಶ್ಚಯವಾಚಕಃ¹⁴

Tulaja derives the same definition from them both (c 1730 A.D.) :

ಸೂಡ ಶಬ್ದೋಚಿತ್ರ ದೇಶೀಯೋ ನಿಶ್ಚಯಾರ್ಥ ಪ್ರಕೀರ್ತತಃ¹⁵

In as much both Kallinātha and Venkaṭamakhi were of Karnataka origin and since the term *sūḷa*, *sūḍa* or its other forms are not found in any other Dravidian language except in Kannaḍa, this is clearly a Kannaḍa word connoting a group of certain song types. The term *gīta* as distinct from *prabhandā* in the above statements should be taken in the restricted sense of Venkaṭamakhi as applying only to the *sāлага sūḍas* such as the *dhruva*. It derives from the root *sūl* (or ಸೂಲ್) meaning *to sound* and *to occur in a predetermined order*¹⁶, and indicates that these seven songs were sung in a prescribed order and in *talas* which were displayed only through the sounded beats in them¹⁷.

13. Kallinātha, *Saṅgītakalānidhi*, commentary on *Saṅgītaratnākara*, IV, 22, p. 213.

14. Venkaṭamakhi, *op.cit.*, IIX, 5, p. 69.

15. Tulaja, *op. cit.*, XII, p. 143.

16. Kesirāja, *Sabdamanidarpaṇa*, Kittel Edn., (1872), p. 33, nos. 53, 54.

17. *Vide infra*, Section IIX.

The evolution of the term *sūda* into *sūḍādi* or *sulādi* presents a problem of considerable interest. Hulagur Krishnacharya's derivation of the term *sūda* from *sūḍha* and *sūddha* and his statement that the *sālaga sūḍas* were the creations *Srīpādarāya* are wholly unacceptable in view of the above indisputable evidence of their earlier origin and usage¹⁸. The suffix—*ādi* in this term, meaning, *beginning with* or *et cetera* clearly suggests that other *prabandhas* were conventionally prescribed or sanctioned to be sung after the seven *sālaga sūḍas*. The term *sūḍādi* has replaced the earlier *sālaga sūda* to signify these latter in a definitely modified and crystalline form undoubtedly in the 15th—16th centuries, A.D. This is inferred from the fact that Kallinātha acknowledges the process of modification in their usage and yet retains the term *sālaga sūda* without offering a current equivalent term, which he frequently does, in the 15th century A.D.¹⁹ In the next century we have for the first time the name *sūḍādi* or *sulādi* applied to these songs by two foremost writers. Thus Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala, in his *Nartananirṇaya* :

ಧ್ರುವಕೋ ಮಂಕಕಶ್ಚೈವ ರೂಪಕೋ ಝಂಪಕಸ್ತಥಾ |
ತ್ರಿವಿಧಶ್ಚಾಡ್ಯತಾಲಾಖ್ಯ ಏಕತಾಲೀತಿ ಚ ಕ್ರಮಾತ್ |
ಸಪ್ತಸೂದಾದಿರತ್ಯುಕ್ತೋ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಲಕ್ಷಣಕೋವಿದ್ಯೇ |
ನಗಣೇನ ವಿರಾಮೇಣ ಧ್ರುವಕಸ್ಸಾತ್ ತತಃ ಪರೇ |
ಮಂತಾದಯೋ ಯಥಾನಾಮತಾಲಕಾಃ ಪರಿಕೀರ್ತಿತಾಃ |
ಮೇಲಾಪವರ್ಜಿತಾಶ್ಚೈತೇ ಸಾರ್ವಧಾತ್ಮೇಕಖಂಡಕಾಃ |
ಕೂಟಸಾಹಾದಿಭಿರ್ಬದ್ಧಾ ಧ್ರುವಕಾದ್ಯಾ ಭವಂತಿ ಚ |
ಇತಿ ಸೂಡಕ್ರಮಃ |²⁰

18. Krishnacharya, Hulaguru—, *Karṇāṭaka Saṅgītavū Dāsakūṭavū*, p. 99.

19. Kallinātha, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-342.

20. Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala, *Nartananirṇaya*, Manuscript in the Manuscripts Library of Sri Varalakshmi Academics of Fine Arts, Mysore.

The second reference is made by *Ashṭāvadhāna Somanārya* (c 1550 A.D.) in his *Svararāgasudhārasa* :

ಧ್ರುವಾದಿಸಪ್ತತಾಲಶ್ಚ ಸ್ವರಭಾಷಾಪದಾನ್ಮಸಿ (ಸ್ವರರಾಗೈಃ ಪ್ರ-) ಗಾಯಂತೇ
ಸೂದಾದಿರಿತಿ ಕಥ್ಯತೇ |²¹

It is incontrovertible that the *sulādis* in their present form were procreated and propagated by the saint composers of the *haridāsakūṭa* of Karnataka in the 15th and 16th centuries, A.D. Hence Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala is probably referring to them when he speaks of *lakshyakovidaiḥ*. Vyāsarāya, the preceptor of Purandaradāsa and the royal preceptor of three generations of Vijayanagar emperors, was a great sanskrit scholar and a great musical composer who was reverently known as *Abhinavabharata-muni* and as *Kalpanācaturānana*. Since Purandaradāsa uses the name *sulādi* in his song *ವಾಸುದೇವನ ನಾಮಾವಳಿಯ ಕ್ಲಿಪ್ತಿಯನು ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರ ವಯದಿಂದ ಬಿಡುಪೆನು* *ಶ್ರೀರಾಜ್ಞರಯನ ಅಹೋಬಲ ನರಸಿಂಹಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳ ಶ್ರೀನಾಮಗಳ ಸುಳಾದಿ ಅರವತ್ತುನಾಲ್ಕು ಸಾವಿರ*²², this form of the name must have been quite in vogue, sanctioned—and perhaps even created—by Vyāsarāya. In any case, the term *sulādi* and the corresponding compositional form were propagated by the *haridāsas* of Karnataka to such an extent that both the term and the *prabandha* have come to be retained today only in exclusive association with them. Hence the suffix—*ādi* must have had some practical significance.

21. Somanārya, *Ashṭāvadhāna*—, *Svararāgasudhārasa*, *extr.* Bengeri Manuscript in the Mss. Library of Sri Varalakshmi Academics of Fine Arts, Mysore.

22. Keshavadasa, Beluru—, *Karṇāṭaka Bhaktavijaya*, p. 205.

This contention, viz., that the sālaga sūda songs were followed by other songs is supported by textual authority. The prescription of a particular order of these and other songs in theory was indicated by the suffix—*krama* or —*ādi*. Someśvara describes the sūda-krama thus :

ಕಂದವೃತ್ತಾಧಿಕಃ ಕಶ್ಚಿತ್ ಪ್ರಬಂಧಶ್ಚೇನ್ನಹಾನ್ ಪುನಃ |
ಅಲ್ಪಃ ಪಶ್ಚಾತ್ ಪ್ರಗಾತವ್ಯಃ ಏಷ ಸೂದಕ್ರಮಃ ಸ್ಮೃತಃ |²³

This prescription is adjacent to the description of the sūddha sūdas in the above text and therefore may be taken to apply to them. However, Subhāṅkara (16th century, A.D.) mentions that the sālaga sūdas were followed by compositions in yati and jhumari²⁴. The probable practice of following up of the rendering of the sālaga sūdas with ālikrama and viprakīrṇa prabandhas was replaced by the haridāsas with a more compact and practicable form wherein the above appendages were athetised. Thus the term sūḍādi or sulādi or sulādi came to stay in Karnataka music.

The Kannada origin and usage of the name sulādi and of the corresponding prabandha is borne out by a reference to it by many a famous Kannada poet. The following few examples may be cited :

ಅಗ್ಗಲ (1189 A.D.) : ಮತ್ತಾಮದರೊಂದು ಭೂಮಿಕೆಗಳೊಳು ಏಕತಾಳ,
ಧ್ರುವ, ತ್ರಿಪುಡೆ, ಮತ್ತೆಯ್ಯ, ಝಂಪೆ, ಅಟತಾಳಂ, ರೂಪಕಂ ಮೊದಲಾದ
ಸೂತ್ರ (? ಸೂಡ) ತಾಳಂಗಳೊಳಂ ನೂರೆಂಟು ನ್ಯಾಸ (? ದೇಸಿ)
ತಾಳಂಗಳೊಳಂ ಕೂಡಿ²⁵

23. Someśvara, *op. cit.*, XVI, 4, p. 50.

24. Subhāṅkara, Saṅgītaśāmodara, II, pp. 27, 28.

25. Aggaḷa, Candraprabhāpurāṇam, XV, 52.

ಗೀತಕಾದಿ ಶುದ್ಧ ಪ್ರಬಂಧಂಗಳೊಳಂ ಮಾತೃಕಾದಿ ದೇಶೀ ಪ್ರಬಂಧಂಗಳೊಳಂ,
ಧ್ರುವಾದಿ ದೇಶೀ ಗೀತಂಗಳೊಳಂ²⁶

ಜನ್ನ (1209 A.D.) : ಇಳಾದಿ ಪ್ರಬದ್ಧ ಶುದ್ಧ ಮಾರ್ಗಮೊಳಂ, ಧ್ರುವಾದಿ-
ಗೀತಜಾತಮೇಳಾಪಕದ ಸೂಳಕ್ರಮದ ದೇಶೀ ಮಾರ್ಗಮೊಳಂ²⁷

ಪಾಲ್ಕುರಿಕೆ ಸೋಮನಾಥ (ಸು. 1300 A.D.) : ಧ್ರುವ, ಮತ್ತೆ, ರೂಪಕ,
ಝಂಪೆ, ಝಂಬಡ, ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಶುದ್ಧ ತಾಳಗಳು²⁸

ಪದ್ಮಣಾಂಕ (ಸು. 1400 A.D.) : ಸುಪ್ರಬಂಧಮುರು ಮಾರ್ಗಬದ್ಧಂ ತದಂತಂ
ಬಂಧಮನುಸ್ಮೃತಿಮಾ ಸುಮಹದಿಚ್ಛಾ ಬಂಧನಮಂತೆ ಸೂಡಾದಿ ಸದ್ರಮಣೀಯ-
ಮಾದತಿ ಚಮತ್ಕೃತಿಗಳಂ²⁹

ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರ (ಸು. 1430 A.D.) : ಧ್ರುವ ಮಟ್ಟಿಯ ರೂಪಕ ಝಂಪೆ ತಿವಡೆ
ಅಟತಾಳ ಏಕತಾಳ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಸಾಳಗ ಸೂಳಮಂ ಪಾಡುವಲ್ಲಿ³⁰

ಬಾಪುಬಲಿ (1539 A.D.) : ದ್ರಾವ ಮಟ್ಟಿಯ ಸೂಳಾದಿ ತಾಳದಿ ರಸಭಾವ
ನೆರೆಯ ಮಂಡಲದೊಳು³¹

ಗೋವಿಂದ ವೈದ್ಯ (1648 A.D.) : ನರಸಿಂಹಸ್ತುತಿ ಗೀತಪ್ರಬಂಧವ ಹಿಂದು
ಸೂಳಾದಿ ತಾಳದಲಿ ಕರವಳಿನಯ ಕೂಡಿ ಕಡುಕುಶಲವೆ ನಾಟ್ಯದಿರವ ಮೆರೆದ-
ರಂಗನೆಯರು³²

Thus it is clear that this prabandha has been sung in Karnataka since at least the 12th century A.D. It is important to note that the names of the sulādi tālas as we know them today have been mentioned by Aggaḷa as long ago as 1189 A.D. This is supported by the incontrovertible testimony of Haripāla cited above³⁰. The significance of this will be briefly described later.

26. *Ibid.*, XV, 72.

27. Janna, Anantanāthapurāṇam, X, 8 prose.

28. Somanatha, Pāḷkuriki—, Paṇḍitārādhyaacaritramu, Parvataparakarāṇamu, pp. 446, 447, 449.

29. Padmaṇāṅka, Padmarājapurāṇam, V, 62.

30. Chandraśekhara, Pampāsthānavarṇanam, 74, p. 27.

31. Bāhubali, Nāgakumāracaritam, XXII, 98.

32. Govindavaidya, Kaṇṭhīravanarasarājaviḷaya, IIX, 61.

IV. STRUCTURE

The above quotations from kannada poets as also from Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala³³ amply establish that these sālaga sūḍa prabandhas were specifically restricted to be sung to certain tālas. This conventional prescription and practice became so rigid in course of time that these tālas came to be known as the suḷādi tālas.

The phenomenon of restricting a prabandha with respect to a tāla is nothing new in our musical literature. In fact, prabandhas were classified into nibaddha and anibaddha depending on whether they were set to tāla or not respectively. The kṛti is an example in modern times of the former, while daṇḍaka, cūrṇikā, gamaka (e.g., bhā-ratavācana) etc., are examples of the latter. The nibaddha prabandha is again divided into two classes: niryukta and aniryukta. The niryukta prabandha was distinguished from the latter in that it was prescribed to be sung only to certain specific tālas, metres, sentiments, etc.³⁴ Thus we have niryukta prabandhas from the times of Mataṅga such as krauñcapada to be sung in prati tāla, siṃhavikrama in ādi tāla, dvipadī in karaṇa tāla and kalahamsa in jhampā tāla etc.³⁴. An interesting development of this situation is the fact that prabandhas, dances and prosodial patterns were named after tālas in ancient India, since the tālas provided the rhythmic definitions or descriptions

33. Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, IV, 21, 22, pp. 212-213. Note that Pārśvadeva (*op. cit.*, IV, 23-25, p. 25) adds a third variety called ubhayātmaka prabandha in which some aspects of the song are fixed by prescription while others are arbitrary and optional.

34. Mataṅga, *op. cit.*, Sl. 408, 421, 422, 423, 425, pp. 144-146.

for these. In this manner, we have varṇa which signifies the names of a nṛtta, vṛtta, tāla and prabandha. We have instances of such prabandhas since at least 1500 years in our country: witness the descriptions by Mataṅga of the prabandhas varṇa, hayalīlā, gajalīlā, jayavardhana etc.³⁵

Next, we notice an important step in the evolution of the sālaga sūḍa prabandha: while in the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. (Cf. Someśvara and Sārṅgadeva) these were regarded as seven separate and distinct compositions which were prescribed to be sung in a particular order and manner, they came to be designated and sung as one prabandha, called the suḷādi in the 16th century A.D. (Cf. Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala and Somanārya) in which each of the above was considered a stanza or the equivalent of the modern carana. This shift from plurality to singularity was undoubtedly wrought by the saints of the haridāsakūṭa as is quite evident in their compositions which are preserved even today. In other words, the suḷādi became a tālamālikā prabandha, just as we have rāgamālikā prabandhas today. However, this should be regarded as an adaptation rather than an invention by Śrīpādarāya, Vyāsarāya, Vādirāja, Purandaradāsa and others. The idea of a rāgamālikā, tālamālikā or even rāga-tāla-mālikā is coeval with Mataṅga in our music. Thus the caturaṅga prabandha was sung in four caranas each set to a different rāga, tāla and language. The śarabhalīlā was sung in eight caranas, each in a separate rāga and tāla³⁶. Sārṅgadeva, who draws upon Mataṅga, Arjuna, Someśvara, Sadāśiva and Jagadekamalla for his

35. *Ibid.*, Sl. 400, 412, 413, 421, pp. 144-146.

36. *Ibid.*, Sl. 419, 420, 421, 415, p. 145.

description of the prabandhas, delineates several prabandhas which are rāgamālikās and tālamālikās, both under the ālikrama and the viprakīrṇa. Thus the pañcatāleśvara was sung to the five classical marga tālas—caccatpuṭa, cācapuṭa, śaṭpitāputra, sampakveshṭāka and udghaṭṭa, to the accompaniment of pātāksharas from paṭaha, huḍukkā, śaṅkha, kāmsyatāla and muraja respectively, besides svara singing. Tālārṇava is another tālamālikā which was sung to a large number of tālas. While the former had different tālas set to different parts of the song, the latter had different tālas for the same parts of the song³⁷. Among the rāga-tāla-mālikā prabandhas, Sārṅgadeva describes śrīraṅga, śrīvilāsa, pañcabhaṅgī, pañcānana, umātilaka, and rāgakadamba³⁸. It is noteworthy that the variety of the rāgakadamba called bhramareḍita was composed to 32 rāgas and 32 tālas; an actual composition of this type was quite popularly known and sung in the 15th century³⁹; this has probably evolved into the song called bhramaragīta of the haridāsas.

The sālaga sūda prabandha and the sulādi should therefore be analysed for structure and organization against this background. From a detailed study of Mānasollāsa, Saṅgītasamayāsāra, Saṅgītaratnākara, Saṅgītopanishat-sāroddhāra etc., the following structural data of the sālaga sūdas may be summarized: They are niryukta prabandhas and belong to the tārāvalī jāti because they have only two organs, pada and tāla. They possess udgrāha, dhruva and ābhoga but no melāpaka;

37. Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, IV, 253-265, pp. 306-309.

38. *Ibid.*, IV, 265-267, pp. 311-312, 302.

39. Kallinātha, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

hence these are tridhātuka prabandhas. [Even though all our writers are unanimens in excluding the melodic element melāpaka from the sālaga sūdas, Kallinātha⁴⁰ and Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala⁴¹ are indeed explicit on this point, Janna⁴² in the early thirteenth century A.D. makes interesting observations. He clearly states that the seven songs consisting of the dhruvaka etc. are deśī in their usage (and, presumably, in origin); that they were collectively called sūlakrama; that these were called gītas (and not prabandhas) and that these also consisted of the melāpaka. No other writer, including the kannaḍa poets, has associated this spanning melodic element with the sālaga sūdas. Since Janna offers this passage in the context of a performance for celestial beings, it may be tentatively inferred that this signifies a possible archaic—and perhaps localised—practice. The particular mention of the melāpaka in this context and the very informed, detailed and accurate musicological references by Janna preclude the possibility of his ignorance in the matter.] Except the first, viz., the dhruvaka prabandha, in which the third section of the udgrāha assumes the role of the antara, the others may or may not employ the antara. If they do, they are caturdhātuka prabandhas; if they do not, they are, like the dhruvaka, tridhātuka prabandhas, in which case they are called upāntara in colloquy.

The sālaga sūdas are seven in number: dhruva, maṇṭha, pratimaṇṭha, nihsārūka, rāsa, aḍḍatālī and ekatālī. Of these seven, only the dhruvaka is different from the others in construction. The others have similar structures except in the prescribed tālas and ascribed 'invisible' auspicious powers (*adyṣṭaphala*).

Each one of them has a number of subvarieties depending on these factors. They are to be sung thus: first, the udgrāha, containing only one section (and therefore only one dhātu) possessing one or two caesuras, is sung. Then the melodic element called dhruva is sung twice. If there is no antara, the dhruva is followed by the ābhoga, sung once; this is followed by the singing of the dhruva, on which the song rests. If there is antara, it is sung in any order at the pleasure of the singer, but should be followed by the dhruva, ābhoga and dhruva, each rendered once in the same order. These songs have no prosodial or other prescriptions regarding the size of each verse line. Again, since they are to be sung consecutively and since different rāgas are not prescribed, it is to be inferred that the sālaga sūḍas are to be sung to the same rāga, a practice which is retained even today. That they were sung to a single rāga since at least 1600 A.D. is seen from Kṛṣṇadāsa: *Sūḍaprabandhaḥ Kathitaḥ ekarāganiveśitah* (*Vide infra*).

The dhruvaka prabandha, on the other hand, has an udgrāha of three sections; the first two of these are sung to the same dhātu, while the third is in a somewhat higher key. This third segment is called antara. The entire udgrāha is sung twice. The first section of the udgrāha is itself the dhruva, but this is not repeated after the antara; that is, it has no independent existence in the song. The udgrāha is followed by ābhoga. This has two sections: the first section has two segments, both sung to the same dhātu. The second section of the ābhoga is sung in a different dhātu of a somewhat higher key. This second section contains the name of God or of the patron.

After the ābhoga, the first section of the udgrāha, that is, the dhruva is sung, at which the song rests. It should be noted that of the seven sālaga sūḍas, it is only the dhruvaka which has prescriptions regarding the size of each verse line. There are, thus, sixteen varieties of this prabandha: the first has eleven syllables per verse line, the second has twelve syllables, the third has thirteen syllables etc., and the sixteenth has twenty-six syllables per verse line.

Each one of the sālaga sūḍas is a niryukta prabandha with respect to sentiment, tāla and adṛṣṭaphala. The extent of the verse line is arbitrary and optional in the case of the maṇṭha, pratimaṇṭha etc. Any one variety from each could presumably be sung in the given order to constitute the sālaga sūḍa prabandha.

The assignment of tālas to these may now be noticed. The dhruvaka prabandha was again exceptional in that, it was not sung to its namesake tāla in the period under consideration. It is interesting that among the very numerous deśī tālas in vogue in this period we do not hear of a dhruva tāla at all⁴⁰. This occurs for the first time in the Rāgatālacintāmaṇi of Poluri Govinda along with the other modern sulādi tālas⁴¹ and then in the Caturdaṇḍi-prakāśikā of Veṅkaṭamahki⁴² though its form is given by Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala for the first time without assigning a name⁴³. The dhruvaka prabandha is unique in the use of

40. Except once in the highly corrupt and unreliable text of Aumapatam, XX, 355, p. 37.

41. Govinda, Polūri—, Rāgatālacintāmaṇi, V, 132 ff. p. 200 et. seq.

42. Veṅkaṭamahki, op. cit., III, 83-116, pp. 29-32.

tālas in that it employs nine separate tālas viz., pratimaṇṭha, nihsāru, kriḍā, ēka, ādi, jhampā, dvitīya, laghuśekhara and hayaḷilā for its sixteen varieties whereas the others use the namesake tālas alone, multiplying into their subvarieties in terms of differences in the number and arrangement of the component parts of the same uniquely named tāla. Thus, for example, the maṇṭha prabandha is sung to six varieties of maṇṭha tāla, each of these latter being named by prefixing the terms jagāṇa, bhagāṇa, sagaṇa, ragaṇa, nagaṇa and the sixth unnamed one which has two drutavirāmas followed by a laghu.

Regarding the themes for these archaic songs, no primary evidence is available to state their nature or scope. They were composed certainly in kannaḍa and possibly in other languages. That they did not exclusively contain praises of God is clear from the prescription of sentiments which range from sambhoga to vīraśrīṅāra. It is interesting to note that a number of śuddha sūḍas, ālikramas and viprakīrṇas are definitely associated with this or that language but the sālaga sūḍas are nowhere so associated. This allows an inference of two alternative possibilities: (a) that these were so very well known to be sung in kannaḍa alone that no separate mention of the fact was deemed necessary by the authors or (b) that they could be sung in any language. Extant evidence does not allow any preference between them.

V. TRANSITION

Even a casual acquaintance with the current usage of the sulādi makes its drastic differences from the foregoing

descriptions at once obvious. The sālaga sūḍa prabandha passed through a transitional epoch in the 14th and 15th centuries A.D.

Such changes are reflected in the evolution of the dhruvaka prabandha of the sālaga sūḍas in the above period. Another equally important factor is the gradual crystallization of the present sulādi tālas out of the melange of the deśī tālas. The dhruvaka prabandha, it will be remembered, was niryukta, that is prescribed with respect to the syllabic quantum of each verse line. That this was undergoing a slow change in practice so that theory had to make allowances for it is clear from two sources. First we have the authority of Rāgārṇava, cited by Śārīṅadhara (c 1350 A.D.). According to this work, the dhruvaka is of three types, uttama, madhyama and kanishṭha, depending on the number of carāṇas, pādas or the stanzas it contains. Clearly then, the dhruvaka was changing in its very size. The uttama dhruvaka has six, the madhyama has five and the kanishṭha, four. From the foregoing description of the structure of the dhruvaka prabandha it is clear that there are five parts in it: three of udgrāha and two of ābhoga. The first part of the udgrāha, I repeat, functions also as the dhruva while the third performs the function—an optional function—of the antara. Now, another section was added to the ābhoga in practice, so that it had a total of three segments and the dhruvaka prabandha had a total of six parts. The uttama conformed to the textual prescription of the three-segment udgrāha, but was further changed in that its last segment contained gamaka prayoga, that is, elaboration of the words in it in rāga only, but not set to tāla. The last addendum of the

ābhoga was sung in a higher key and in gamaka, or contained the author's signature. In the madhyama dhruvaka, the ābhoga had only two segments, the second being in a higher key and containing the patron's name. The kanishṭha had only four pādas; here the udgrāha had two segments, the second being in a somewhat higher key. The ābhoga also had two sections, the second in a somewhat higher key, containing the patron's name. The injunction of padaniyama (i.e., conformity to the prescribed number of sections or parts) and varṇaniyama (i.e., conformity to prescribed syllabic content) was relaxed into padaniyama and or varṇaniyama. Even then, if the varṇaniyama was followed in two sections, the others were exempted from this rule:

ಷಣ್ಣಾಂ ಪದಾನಾಂ ನಾ ವರ್ಣನಿಯಮೋ ನಾ ದ್ವಯೋರ್ಭವೇತ್ |
ಪದಯೋರ್ವರ್ಣನಿಯಮೋ ಧ್ರುವಾಣಾಂ ಹಿ ದ್ವಿಧಾ ಗತಿಃ |
ಪದದ್ವಯೇ ಯದಾ ವರ್ಣನಿಯಮಃ ಕ್ರಿಯತೇ ಬುಧೈಃ |
ತದಾ ಪದಾನಿ ಚಾನ್ಯಾನಿ ಭವಂತಿ ನಿಯಮಂ ವಿನಾ |⁴³

The importance of the dhruvaka prabandha in contemporary musical practice is reflected by Sārṅgadharā's eulogy:

ನ ವಿವೇಕಂ ವಿನಾ ಜ್ಞಾನಂ ಧ್ಯಾನಂ ನಾತ್ಮರಸಂ ವಿನಾ |
ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾ ನ ವಿನಾ ದಾನಂ ಗೀತಂ ನ ಧ್ರುವಕಂ ವಿನಾ |⁴⁴

and by Sudhākalaśa's praise:

ಯಥಾ ಸಮೋ ವಿನಾ ನೀರಂ ಯಥಾ ಗೀತಂ ನ ಧ್ರುವಕಂ ವಿನಾ |⁴⁵

The second authority in this regard is Kallinātha (c 1440 A.D.). He offers a very lucid analysis of the

43. Sārṅgadharā, Sārṅgadharapaddhati, 1966-1975, pp. 293-294 et seq.

44. Ibid., 1965, p. 293.

45. Sudhākalaśa, Saṅgītopaniṣat-sāroddhāra, I, 51, p. 9.

discrepancy between prescription and practice of these prabandhas. In the first place, some of the tālas prescribed for the various sālaga sūdas were different only in name but were morphically identical. He explains this anomalously in his commentary on the tāla chapter of the Saṅgītaratnākara. In the second place, the aksharaniyama of the 16 varieties of the dhruvaka prabandha was not realised in contemporary practice. Then how could these departures be accepted in practice and the songs still called dhruvakas? The explanation is that the term akshara was given an extended connotation to include pada i.e., word, so as to cover this growing divergence in practice. After all, padārtha is (often) described as aksharārtha. Therefore, it was enough if the dhruvaka conformed to this numeral or magnitudinal prescription in syllables or words. When even this was absent in a song which was composed and sung under the name of the dhruvaka, only the adṛṣṭaphala, i.e., the capacity to give the variously promised auspicious and other desirable effects was absent. For, after all, these syllabic prescriptions were only for this latter purpose. Even if this is absent, the dṛṣṭaphala or visible (and therefore the chief) effect of janarāñjana or popular appeal was still there; hence the dhruvaka of current practice was not to be disparaged. The other sālaga sūdas such as the maṇṭha also did not conform to the textual prescription of tāla, rasa or the promise of invisible—and intangible—effects in current usage; the same argument holds in their case also. Thus Kallinātha:

ನನು ಜಯಂತಾದಿಷು ಮೋಹಶನು ಧ್ರುವೇಷು ಯೋಃಕ್ಷರಸಂಖ್ಯಾನಿಯಮ
ಉಕ್ತೇ, ಸ ವರ್ತಮಾನೇಷು ಕೇಷುಚಿತ್ಧ್ರುವೇಷು ನ ದ್ವೈತೇ; ತತ್ ಕಥಂ

ಲಕ್ಷಣಹೀನತ್ವೇಽಸಿ ಲೋಕೇ ಪರಿಗೃಹ್ಯ ಇತಿಚೇತ್, ಸತ್ಯಮೇತತ್ | ಅತ್ರಾಕ್ಷರ-
ಶಬ್ದೇನ ಪದಾನ್ಯುಚ್ಯಂತೇ; ಯಥಾಯಮುಕ್ತಾರ್ಥ ಇತಿ ಪದಾರ್ಥೋ ವರ್ಣ್ಯತೇ |
ತೇನ ಕ್ವಚಿತ್ ಪದಾನ್ಯಾಂ ವಾ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಯಾ ನಿಯಮೋ ದ್ರಷ್ಟವ್ಯಃ | ಯತ್ರ
ಸೋಽಸಿ ನಾಸ್ತಿ, ತತ್ರಾಕ್ಷರಾದೇಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾನಿಯಮಾಭಾವಾತ್ ನಿಯಮೋಕ್ತಾದೃಷ್ಟ-
ಫಲಸ್ಯಾಭಾವ ಏವ, ನ ತು ದೃಷ್ಟಫಲಸ್ಯ ಜನರಂಜನಾದೇರಸಿ | ತೇನ ತೇಷಾಂ
ಲೋಕಪರಿಗೃಹೋ ಽಪ್ಯುಪಪನ್ನ ಏವ | ಅನಿಯತಾಕ್ಷರರಸತಾಲಯುಕ್ತ ಸ್ತೋ-
ದ್ಗಾಹಾದಿ ಅವಯವಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಸ್ಯಾವಿಶಿಷ್ಟತ್ವೇನ ತೇಷಾಮಸಿ ಸಲಕ್ಷಣತ್ವಾತ್
ಧ್ರುವವ್ಯವಹಾರೋ ನ ಹೀಯತ ಏವ | ಮಂತಾದೀನಾಂಚ ರಸತಾಲನಿಯ-
ಮಾಭಾವೋಽಪ್ಯೇವಂ ದ್ರಷ್ಟವ್ಯಃ⁴⁶

This illustrates an important principle. Whenever a set of newly observed facts differ from an extant explanation of them, be it a physical or biological discipline or in other empirical disciplines such as the musical, an extension of the connotative, signifi- or denotative values of the definitive terms is first attempted to interpret observation in terms of theory. This is always an inevitable transitional state. It is only when fact or observation outgrows even this scope of the terms that the old theory is rejected and a new theory installed; new definitions are coined. The accent is always on the acceptance of practice, especially in art disciplines. This is clear from the above extract from Kallinātha. Note in particular his acknowledgement of the departure from textual requirements of the dhruvaka prabandha with respect to rasa and tāla and also of his observation that the arrangement of the melodic components such as the udgrāha etc. was no longer characteristic of and specific to the dhruvaka as found in practice. In other words, the dhruvaka and maṭha, etc. were losing the characteristics which distinguished them in theory and practice. There

46. Kallinātha *op. cit.*, pp. 339, 340.

was thus an obvious necessity to extend the interpretive scope of the textual requirements in his time but not enough to warrant a total rejection of the traditional description of this song type. It may be noted that he nowhere calls these prabandhas sulādi, a term which must have crept into textual usage in our musical theory between 1450 A.D. and 1550 A.D.⁴⁷

VI. FORMAL CULMINATION

Let us now briefly examine the form of the sulādi as may be reconstructed from textual data and actual, preserved compositions of the 15th to 17th centuries, A.D.

A major change that the sulādi underwent in this period, notably in Karnataka, its native land, is in the literary themes. Whereas until this period the sālaga sūdas could be composed on practically any theme ranging from physical love to divine praise, now they were exclusively sung in the praise of God, or for the social or moral uplift of the individual. The haridāsas of Karnataka were directly responsible for this.

The second major change consisted of a shift in the application of the tālas to these prabandhas—from the deśi varieties to the seven tālas used by us now, *viz.*, dhruva, maṭhya, rūpaka, jhampā, tripuṭa, aṭṭa and eka, besides an eighth called jhompāṭa. This involved three steps: (a) selection out of the deśi tālas, such time measures as were simple and possessed a reasonable

47. Note however, that the term sūdādi is mentioned only once by Sudhakalasa (*op. cit.*, I, 95, p. 14):

temporal span; and fixation in each of them the organs with respect to number, arrangement and type of accent in the cycle of the āvarta; (b) representing all the rhythmic requirements of current and potential practice so that these tālas would be unambiguous, comprehensive and adequate. They would have rigidity enough in form to confer stability and endurance and yet possess enough elasticity to allow for necessary additions and subtractions demanded by the aesthetic needs and/or conventions of the current and future generations; (c) the development of a scheme by which these tālas could be applied, correlated, stabilized and propagated in contemporary musical practice. How these three methodological problems were solved by the haridāsas of Karnataka will be considered in the section on Sulādi Tālas below.

A third change was essentially formal. This involved a shift from plurality to singularity. What were once regarded as seven separate songs came to be considered and sung as a single song. This was made possible by conferring rigidity in the prescription of chronological sequence, continuity and unity in mood and theme as well as unity in rhythmic and melodic structure. These three are the fundamental aspects of any musical composition. This was achieved by regarding these prabandhas as stanzas of a single composition and by bestowing a recurrent melodic pattern on them. In this last, however, textual prescription appears to have been strictly enforced until comparatively recent times.

Such a change would also be reflected in the enlargement and athetization in form. For example, the sūḍakrama of Someśvara as shown above⁴⁸ requires

many other prabandhas such as kanda and vṛtta to be sung besides the sūḍas. This probably applied to the sālaga sūḍas as well. The compactness and unity of the sulādi could be maintained only by athetizing the latter. Enlargement would be necessitated by a desire for completeness in rhythmic display. We have two indications of such enlargement in the 16th century A.D. Thus Kṛṣṇadāsa:

ತಾಲಾ ನವಾದಿಕಾ ಯತ್ರ ಬದ್ಧಾಃ ಪಾಟಾದಿವರ್ಜಿತಾಃ |

ಸೂಡಪ್ರಬಂಧಃ ಕಠಿತಃ ಏಕರಾಗನಿವೇಶಿತಃ ||⁴⁹

Subhaṅkara specifies these nine prabandhas thus:

ಧ್ರುವಕೋ ಮಂಡಕಕ್ಷೈವ ಪ್ರತಿಮಂಡೋ ನಿಶಾರುಕಃ | ರಾಸಕಃ ಪ್ರತಿ-
ತಾಲಶ್ಚ ತಥಾನ್ಯಾ ಚೈಕತಾಲಿಕಾ | ಯತಿಶ್ಚ ಧ್ರುವಮರಿಶ್ಚೈತಿ ಸಾಲಗಂ ಸೂಡಮಾರಿ-
ತಮ್ ||⁴⁹ He also states that the prabandhas called āḍhu (aṭṭa), pratimaṇḍa, niśārūka, rāsaka and adbhuta (?) are chuṭikilās. Note the use of the word chuṭikilā, which refers to the practice of keeping time with the chuṭikā, i.e., snapping of fingers: in other words, the use of the middle and fast tempos. Further, Subhaṅkara enumerates ten other varieties called madhyabhāga (?), carcarī, gomnīvṛtta, pari, ukthā, padvalikā, veda, pañcama, āryā, jayaśrī and pañcacāmara from an unspecified source. These and many other varieties of the sālaga sūḍas are described in detail by Kumbhakarṇa in his Saṅgītarāja (IV, 2, 27-29, [p. 553]). Subhaṅkara goes on to make the improbable claim that the pratimaṇḍa and these latter ten are not sung according to Bharatamuni:

48. Kṛṣṇadāsa, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

49. Subhaṅkara, *op. cit.*, II, p. 18.

ಪ್ರತಿಮಂಡೇನ ಸಹಿತಶ್ಚರ್ಚರೀಕಾದಿ ಶಾ(?ಸಾ)ಲಗಾಃ |
 ಏಕಾದಶ ನ ಗೀಯಂತೇ ಭರತಸ್ಯ ಮುನೇರ್ಮತೇ |
 ಅತೋ ಲಕ್ಷಣಮೇತೇಷಾಂ ಜ್ಞೇಯಂ ತುಂಬುರುನಾಟಕೇ |⁵⁰

Hence one concludes that these ten beginning with carcarī are found described in the Tumburunāṭaka. However, these are irrelevant to the sulādis of Karnataka. Irrelevant also are the so called saṅkīrṇa sūdas he describes at the end of the chapter. The jhumari may be noted here as departing the rules of prosody; the yati is of four types: (a) līlā of 13 syllables sung to a pluta in karuṇā rasa, (b) āndolitā of 15 syllables, sung to a tāla of two laghus, a virāma and a druta in vīra and śṛṅgāra, (c) kaumudī of 17 syllables, sung to lalita tāla (i.e., one pluta followed by a laghu) in hāsya rasa and (d) hamsa-mālā of 19 syllables, sung to four drutas followed by a guru in śānta rasa.

Veṅkaṭamakhi sheds revealing light on the sulādis. He clearly states that the above compositions were sung only to nine tālas, and that the prabandhas were sung to the deśī tālas :

ಏತಾನ್ ಧ್ರುವಾದಿಕಾನ್ ಸಪ್ತತಾಲಾನ್ ಸೂಲಾದಿಸಂಜ್ಞಿಕಾನ್ |
 ತಾಲಂ ಚ ಝಂಪಾಟಾಪ್ಯಾನಂ ರಗಣಂ ಚ ಕ್ವಚಿತ್ ಕ್ವಚಿತ್ |
 ಗೀತಪ್ರಕರಣೋಕ್ತೇಷು ಗೀತೇಷು ನಿವೇಶಯೇತ್ |
 ಏತನ್ಮನಾತಿರಿಕ್ತಾಂಸ್ತು ನ ಗೀತೇಷು ನಿವೇಶಯೇತ್ |
 ಪ್ರಬಂಧೇಷು ಚ ಸಂಯೋಜ್ಯಾಸ್ತಾಲಪ್ರಕರಣೋದಿತಾಃ |⁵²

Thus even though he closely follows Sārṅgadeva in the description of the sālaga sūdas in the gīta prakaraṇa in

50. *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

52. Veṅkaṭamakhi, *op. cit.*, III, 111-113, pp. 31, 32.

the application of the tālas⁵³, indicates that in his times the sulādi had come to be sung only to the dhruva, maṭhya, rūpaka, jhampā, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, eka and the jhompaṭa tālas besides another called ragaṇa maṭhya. The jhompaṭa tāla has two drutas of two counts each, followed by a laghu of four counts⁵⁴. The ragaṇa maṭhya has a laghu sandwiched between two gurus as against the ordinary maṭhya which has a druta sandwiched between two laghus. The former is usually of the caturaśra variety, having four counts per laghu, though the trīśra and khaṇḍa varieties are also known.

It may be noted in passing that Subhaṅkara, Veṅkaṭamakhi and others agree that the sulādi was sung to nine tālas. This change took place between 1550 A.D. and 1650 A.D., since Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala⁵⁵ and Somanārya⁵⁶ have mentioned only the seven sulādi tālas. An apparent anachronism in the names of the sālaga sūdas (and of the tālas) may be noticed in the case of Haripāla (c 1175 A.D.):

....ಧ್ರುವೋ ಮತ್ಯಃ ಪ್ರತಿಮತೋಽಘ ರೂಪಕಃ | ತ್ರಿವಿಡಾಸಿ ಚ ಝಂಪಾ
 ಸ್ಯಾದ್ಭುತಾಲಸ್ತು....ಚೇತಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧಾನಾಂ ಸರ್ವಸಪ್ತತಿರುದೀರಿತಾಃ⁵⁰

and in Sudhākalaśā :

ಉತ್ತಮಃ ಸಾಲಗಃ ಸೂಡೋ ಧ್ರುವಾದ್ಯೈಃ ಸಪ್ತಭಿರ್ಭವೇತ್ |
 ತ್ರಿವಿಡಾ ಝಂಪತಾಲಾದ್ಯೈರ್ಯುಕ್ತಶ್ಚ ವಿವಿಧೈಃ ಪದ್ಯೈಃ |
 ಪರಿಪೂರ್ಣೋ ಭವೇತ್ ಸೂಡಃ ಕೇಚಿದಾಚಮ್ಬುರಿತ್ಯತಃ |
 ಹೀನಸ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮಃ ಪ್ರೋಕ್ತೋಽಘಮೋ ಹೀನತತ್ಪ್ರಥಮಃ |⁵⁵

53. *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 60-74.

54. *Ibid.*, III, 85, p. 29.

55. Sudhākalaśa, *op. cit.*, I, 91, 92, p. 13.

If we also read Aggaḷa (1189 A.D.) with this,

ಮತ್ತಾ ಮದರೊಂದು ಭೂಮಿಕೆಗಲೊಳು ಏಕತಾಳ, ಭೃಷ, ತ್ರಿವೇದಿ,
ಮುಕ್ತಿಯ, ಅಟಿತಾಳ ರೂಪಕಂ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಸೂಡ ತಾಳಂಗಳೊಳಂ⁵⁶

the conclusion becomes inescapable that these prabandhas and their namesake tālas were known and practised in Karnataka at least since the 12th century A.D., but that these acquired universal adoption and application in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. in other parts of India also.

A fourth and minor change that the sulādi underwent in the 15th–16th centuries has already been noticed: This is essentially a theoretical one: the sālaga sūḍas were specifically and uniquely called gītas in contradistinction to the prabandhas. Venkaṭamakhi raises the pertinent question: since the term gīta has the etymological scope to signify anything sung and should thus cover ālāpa, ṭhāya and prabandha also, why should the sālaga sūḍas alone be called gītas?

ನನು ಗೀಯತ ಇತ್ಯೇವಂ ವ್ಯುತ್ಪತ್ತಾಃ ಸಾಲಪತಾಯಯೋಃ |
ಪ್ರಬಂಧಾನಾಂ ಚ ಗೀತತ್ವಮಸ್ತಿ ತತ್ತಿಂ ನಿರೂಪ್ಯತೇ | ಇತಿ ಜೇಷ್ಠ,

He himself gives a lucid and convincing answer: the term has acquired a conventional meaning and refers only to the sālaga sūḍas:

ಉಚ್ಯತೇ, ಗೀತಶಬ್ದೋಽಯಂ ಯೋಗತಃ ಪುನಃ |
ಪ್ರಬಂಧಾಲಾಪತಾಯಾನಾಂ ವಾಚಕಃ ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮಭಾಷ್ಯಸೌ |
ರೂಢ್ಯಾ ಸಾಲಗಸೂಡಾಖ್ಯಗೀತಭೇದೈಕವಾಚಕಃ |
ಆತಃ ಸಾಲಗಸೂಡಾಖ್ಯಂ ಗೀತಮತ್ರ ನಿರೂಪ್ಯತೇ |⁵⁶

The need for such a distinction arises in the justification of the term caturdaṇḍī covering gīta, prabandha, ālāpa

56. Venkaṭamakhi. *op. cit.*, IIX, 2-4, p. 69.

and ṭhāya which are the four veritable pillars of music. This term was promoted by Gopalanāyaka of Karnataka as has been noted above.¹

The term gīta appears to have been used in both a general and a restricted sense in our music. In its general scope of anything sung with an aesthetic appeal, Sārṅgadeva defines gīta as *rañjakah svarasandarbho gīta-mityabhidhiyate* (*op. cit.*, IV, 1, p. 203). Kallinātha explains the use of the epithet *rañjakah* as applying to *sandarbha* (*Ibid.*). Names of works such as *Gītaraṇāvalī* of Jyāyana etc. also support this definition. A large number of our musical treatises employ the term in this general sense. However, in Karnataka, gīta has signified specifically the sālaga sūḍas at least from the 12th century A. D. Note that Aggaḷa⁵⁶, Janna⁵⁷, and Govinda-vaidyā⁵⁸ clearly distinguish the gīta from the prabandha and apply the former only to the sālaga sūḍas. This usage by the practical exponents in music, *vidyāvantaru*, in Karnataka (Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, VI, 797, p. 440; *vide also* Kallinātha on the same), appears to have been recognised in theory for the first time by Gopalanāyaka as noted above. That this gained ground is clear from the fact that Kṛṣṇadāsa named his work *Gītaprakāśa* in about 1600 A.D. because of his comprehensive treatment of sālaga sūḍas.

The use of the suffixes -ādi and -krama with 'sūḍa' may be remarked. Padmaṇāṅka⁵⁹ uses the word sūḍādi, perhaps for the first time. We have already seen that Janna⁵⁷ uses the word sūlakrama. It is interesting that two out of the three classes of prabandha should be called sūḍakrama and ālikrama, and that the origin or derivations of both sūḍa and āli should be left unexplained. Since the

sanskrit terms *āli* and *krama* overlap in their connotations, it is highly probable that *āli* is also of a *deśya* i.e., localised, popular origin. It is also very likely that, like the *sūḍas*, the *ālikrama* prabandhas were sung in a continuous, regular order. Sārṅgadeva makes it clear that the *āli* prabandhas could be interspersed among the *śuddha* *sūḍas*. If so, these twenty-four songs become *āli-krama* (*op. cit.*, IV, 27, p. 213). Note that the suffix —*krama* appears to have been inspired from *sūḍakrama* here. In the case of such admixture, the eight *śuddha-sūḍas* and the twenty-four *āli* prabandhas are together called *sūḍālikrama* (*Ibid.*, IV, 28, p. 213). This term has misled some modern authors to equate the *sūḍāli* to *sulādi* by an argument of syllabic inversion. Such an equation is clearly untenable since the *sūḍāli* applies *only* to the admixture of *śuddha* *sūḍas* with the *ālikramas* as has been asserted by both Simhabhūpāla and Kallinātha (*loc. cit.*) and also since such admixture is obviously precluded in the *sālaga* *sūḍas* from which our modern *sulādis* derived directly in name and form. It may be remarked that Aggaḷa⁵⁷ calls the *śuddha* *sūḍa* prabandhas as *śuddha* *gītas*, the *āli* prabandhas as *deśī* prabandhas and the *sālaga* *sūḍas* as *deśī* *gītas*.

VII. FORMAL CONTINUITY

The form of the *sulādi* as discussed in the foregoing was fixed and stabilised by the 18th century A.D. and had become very popular as a composition in classical music. It is noteworthy that by this time the *sulādi* had come to be recognized as a distinct form characterizing the *dāsa* *sāhitya* and devotional music of Karnataka even

as far away as Tanjore. In fact, no composition corresponding to the *sulādi* is either preserved or known in any language in India other than in kannada. It is sometimes claimed that Anṇamācārya, the vaishṇava saint of Andhra and a senior contemporary of Purandaradāsa, composed similar songs. That he was not the originator of the *sulādi* is evident from the many *sulādis* composed before his time by Śrīpādarāya etc. It must also be admitted that Anṇamācārya nowhere employs the name *sulādi* for these alleged compositions; nor indeed, his grandson, Cinnamācārya. Again, the *tālas* have nowhere been prescribed or specifically indicated for any of his compositions, though presumably these seven *tālas* were themselves employed. The magnitude of the verse line in these compositions sometimes approximates to the *āvarta* of the one or the other of these *tālas*, but this alone does not constitute a *sulādi*; the above mentioned prescriptions of the melodic pattern should be rigidly observed in a *sulādi*. Such an authentic example from Purandaradāsa will be discussed below. Unfortunately, the songs of Anṇamācārya have not been preserved in the original music and therefore we are not in a position to affirm that he composed *sulādis*.

We have the authority of Tulaja (c 1730 A.D.) for some very interesting information on the *sulādis*. He derives his definitions and descriptions regarding the *sulādi* from the Nartananirṇaya of Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala, whom he reveres as being equally proficient in theory and practice:

ತಥಾ ಚೋಕ್ತಂ ವಿಖ್ಯಾತೇನ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಾಸುಭವಶಾಲಿನಾ⁵⁸

57. Tulaja *op. cit.*, p. 111.

Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala himself bases his material on that of Śārṅgadeva⁵⁸ and makes the following interesting statement after his description of the maṇṭha prabandha :

ರಂಗಮ್ಮೋತೇನ ತಾಲೇನ ತಥಾ ಚಙ್ಕತ್ತುಬೇನ ಚ |
ಗೀತಂ ಮಂಠಾಧಿಧಂ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತುಃ ಕೇಚಿಲ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವಿಹಾರದಾಃ |
ಸೂಚಕ್ರಮಂ ವದಂತ್ಯನೈ ಕೇಚಿಲ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವಿಹಾರದಾಃ |
ಧ್ರುವೋ ಮುಟ್ಟೋ ರೂಪಕಶ್ಚ ಝಂಪಾತಾಲಸ್ತತಃ ಪರಮ್ |
ತ್ರಿಪುಟಶ್ಚಾಢ್ಯತಾಲಾಢ್ಯೈಕತಾಲೇತಿ ಚ ಕ್ರಮಾತ್ |⁵⁹

It should be noted that the alternative sūḍakrama is ascribed by Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala to *lakshya-viśāradas*. This reference is certainly to the *lakshya-viśāradas* of Karnataka from where he hails. That practice was divided in his time—presumably since a long time if credence is to be attached to the above quotations from Aggaḷa, Haripāla and Sudhākalaśa—⁶⁰, ⁶¹, between retaining the archaic form and accepting the new morphological form of the sulādi is obvious from the above statement.

This divergence in contemporary practice, however, was neither absolute nor arbitrary. The two schools had a common basis so that they were essentially equivalent, except in minor details and variations. Such a reconciliation is ably attempted by Tulaja. He asks, how are theory and practice to be reconciled in the face of the fact that the currently used forms of the dhruvaka etc. prabandhas, which are quite renowned, do not conform to the prescribed rules at all?

58. Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala, . *cit.*, *extr.* Tulaja, *op. cit.*, XII, pp. 146-153; also *Ms. loc. cit.*

59. *Ibid.*, *extr.*, Tulaja, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

ಶ್ರೀ ಪುರಂದರದಾಸಾದ್ಯೈರಭಿಯುಕ್ತೈಃ ಪುರಾತನೈಃ |
ಪ್ರಯುಕ್ತೈಃಪು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧೈಃಪು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯೈಃಪು ವಿವಿಧೈಃಪು |
ಧ್ರುವಾಧಿಸು ತ್ವಮುಕ್ತಾನಿ ಲಕ್ಷಣಾನಿ ಮಹಾಮತೇ |
ನ ದೃಶ್ಯಂತೇ, ತತ್ರ ಕಥಂ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಲಕ್ಷಣಸಂಗತಿಃ ಇತಿಚೇತ್, ⁶⁰

He answers this question himself : I, having understood the lakṣhaṇa of the dhruva prabandha, shall clear this doubt; for this purpose, I shall take the example of the variety of dhruva called jayanta, from a sulādi of Purandaradāsa in devagāndhāra rāga and rāsā tāla :

... ಉಚ್ಯತೇ ಶ್ರೀಮದ್ ಭೋಸಲಾವನಿಜಾನಿನಾ |
ಧ್ರುವಾದೀನಾಂ ಲಕ್ಷಣಾನಿ ಹೃದಿ ಸಮ್ಯಗ್ ವಿಭಾವಯ |
ಏನಂ ಕೃತೇ ತತಃ ಶಂಕಾಂ ಸ್ವಯಮೇವ ನಿವರ್ತತೇ |
ತಥಾ ಪೃತ್ಯ ಜಯಂತಾಢ್ಯುಧ್ವೋದಾಹೃತಿರುಚ್ಯತೇ |
ಶೃಂಗಾರೇ ರಾಸ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟೈತಸ್ಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣಮ್ |
ಅಸ್ಮೋದಾಹರಣಂ ಪುರಂದರದಾಸಾನಾಂ ಸೂಲಾದಿಃ |
ದೇವಗಾಂಧಾರ ರಾಗೇ ರಾಸತಾಲೇ ⁶¹

Then he proceeds to show how these are actually equivalent and that this divergence in practice arises because of a difference in the application of tālas. He illustrates this with a sulādi of Purandaradāsa, *hasugala kareva dhvani*, which must have been so great a favourite with the people of his times that he does not find it necessary to give the full song :

ಅತಿಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ತ್ವಾದತ್ತ ವಿಶೇಷತೇನ ವ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿತಾಃ |

I have been able to reconstruct the music and words of this sulādi with great difficulty using the corrupt version in Saṅgita Sampradāyapradarsinī⁶¹ and the above source.

60. Tulaja, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

61. Subbarāma Dikshita, Saṅgita Sampradāyapradarsinī, Vol. I, pp. 577-586.

It is astonishing that this composition should have retained its close conformity with textual requirements over the centuries especially in view of the great popularity it enjoyed. Thus in the dhruvaka prabandha of the above sulādi, the music is tridhātuka and corresponds exactly to the theory in the udgrāha, dhruva and ābhoga; this is also true of the mañṭha and other stanzas of the song.

Tulaja also records certain departures from textual description and tradition in current musical practice. First, there was a relaxation in the prescribed chronological order of the stanzas:

ಪ್ರಯೋಕ್ತಿ ಚಾತೋ ಧ್ರುವಾದೀನಾಂ ಪೌರ್ವಾಪರ್ಯಂತಂ ತತ್ರ ದೃಶ್ಯತೇ⁶²

Second, a change in the prescribed tālas:

ಅಥ ನಾ ಜಯಂತಾದಿಘನಿ ವಿಹತ್ತತ್ತಾಽಲಭೇದಕೃತ ತತ್ತದಾಖ್ಯೋ ಧ್ರುವ ಇತಿ ಜ್ಞೇಯಃ⁶³

Third, changes wrought by differences in local usage:

ತತ್ತದ್ವೇಶಾನುಸಾರಲಕ್ಷಣಮ್⁶⁴

In this he is referring to the differences in tāla application. It is of interest that that Tulaja uses the currently employed dvitīya tāla for the rāsa and Subbarāma Dikshita changes this to the present ādī tāla. Tulaja concludes his discussion of the sulādis thus:

ವಿವಂ ಸಾಲಗಸೂದಸ್ತ ಸೂಲಾದಿಕ್ರಮ ಉಂಕಿತಃ |
ಸೂಲಾದಿಭೇದಾ ಬಹುಪ್ರಸಂಗೈವಮಿತ್ಯನುಧಾದ್ಯತಾಮ್ |
ಶಾಲ್ಯಃ ಸಪ್ತಭಿರೇವೈತ್ಯಧ್ರುವಾದ್ಯೋಲೋಕನಿಶ್ರುತ್ಯಃ |
ಏಕೂನಿ ಗಾಯಂತೆ ಗೀತಾನ್ಯೇಕೇನ್ವೇಕೈಕತಾಲತಃ |⁶⁵

The popularity of the sulādis in Tulaja's age may further be noticed from the fact that he gives passages from as

62. Tulaja, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

many as 21 sulādis of contemporary usage in illustrating the lakshyas of the various rāgas in vogue.⁶⁶

VIII. LAKSHYAPRAYOGA

We shall analyse the lakshyas in the available sulādis for characteristic and distinguishing features. I have examined a large number of sulādis including a few by Vyāsārāya and Śrīpādarāya, but mostly by Purandaradāsa and Vijayadāsa, who are the most prolific composers of the sulādis and must be regarded as the stabilizers of the sulādi in practice. In fact, if reliance may be placed on the above cited song of Purandaradāsa⁶⁷, sixtyfour thousand sulādis were composed by him alone! Even after making due allowances for the spuriousness of this composition, exaggeration, etc., he must have composed at least several hundreds of sulādis, especially in view of the fact that Tulaja considers him, some 150 years later, as the foremost authority in both theory and practice of the sulādi⁶⁸. After Purandaradāsa, Vijayadāsa is certainly the foremost composer of the haridāsa school.

The sulādis are, then, tālamālikā compositions. They consist of several stanzas, the number of which varies from five to nine or ten. The number of lines differs from stanza to stanza in the same sulādi and from sulādi to sulādi. The magnitude of the verse line is also not fixed. The available sulādis rarely conform to the textually prescribed size in words or syllables. They approximate more or less in the syllables per line with the size of the

63. *Ibid.* X, pp 72-111, *passim*.

āvarta of the corresponding tāla. The above mentioned sulādi, *hasugala kareva dhvani*, however, does conform to the prescription for the jayanta dhruva. Their literary themes are purely religious and spiritual. Thus they include biography, ritual, worship, divine praise, ethics, social reformation, enunciation, elucidation or interpretation of vedic or upanishadic thought, communion with God, the place of devotion in religious and spiritual experience and so on. They are permeated with the fragrance of intimacy, sincerity, and simplicity. In fact, the haridāsa has often sung a sulādi as a lullaby to send the Lord to sleep. He has made the complete, unconditional and irrevocable surrender of his soul to the Lord's care in the sulādis. He is intimate enough to chide Him and mock Him in many a sulādi. God is his father, mother, friend and master; indeed, he has even yearned for this truant and unfaithful Lord as a love consumed, *virahotkaṇṭhitā nāyikā*. The sulādi reflects many a facet of the philosophical, religious, spiritual, mystic, social and musical personality of Karnataka.

The sulādis appear to contain a traditionally predetermined pattern in their tāla characteristics. They contain a minimum of five and a maximum of eight tālas. Of these, dhruva and maṭhya are inevitably used without exception in all the sulādis I have examined. Each sulādi invariably concludes with what is called jati or jate. The jati is always of two lines, each having approximately the same prosodial construction and extent, but variable from sulādi to sulādi. The jati is often called the mūrchanā. The musicological justification of this latter term, if any, is not known and has no relation to the namesake scale

modulations derived from the grāma.⁶⁴ The jati is the local usage in kannada of the name *yati* prescribed by Subhaṅkara as an integral part of the sulādi⁶⁵ and may also possibly, but not very probably, mean that this concluding section was chorally sung. From the available evidence, it cannot be said that *jati* was specifically restricted to this or that tāla. It often serves to function as the literary (but not the musical) counterpart of the *pallavi* in the *kṛti* and is usually the epitome of the literary theme. The sulādis almost invariably commence on dhruva tāla and are immediately followed by maṭhya tāla in almost all the *imprimees*, as would be expected from the order of the sulādi *tāla-alāṅkāras* in vogue from the 17th century A.D. Notable exceptions are the two given by Subbarāma Dīkshita⁶⁶ which commence with rūpaka and ādi tālas respectively and do not appear to contain the jati. The unreliable Udupi edition of the sulādis of Purandaradāsa, Vijayadāsa and others also gives instances of aṭṭa, tripuṭa and eka tālas in initial usage⁶⁶. Such disorder has also been noted by Tulaja⁶⁶ who indicates contemporary sanction or at least usage. The maṭhya tāla was presumably always used as a ragaṇa variety rather than in its present form, though this is not specifically indicated in any available *impressi typis*. The trisra, caturaśra and khaṇḍa ragaṇa

64. Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, 1, 4, 9, p. 103.

65. Subbarāma Dīkshita, *op. cit.*, pp. 115—120, 577—586.

66. Guru Rao, Pāvāñje—, (ed.) Purandaradāsara Sulādigaḷu, pp. 2, 26, 28. A unique instance of this kind is noticed by Huchha Rao Bengeri and Krishna Sharma Betageri (eds.), *Māhātmyajāna*, p. 145, commencing with tripuṭa tāla.

maṭhya tālas appear to be mostly used. The particular advantage of employing the ragaṇa maṭhya tāla is the facility of uniform prosodial construction and the promotion of a sense of triple, quadruple and quintuple movement, i.e., triśra, caturaśra and khaṇḍa gati bhedas. The ragaṇa maṭhya does not appear to have been used in any compositions other than the sulādis. A variety of maṭhya tāla called pañcagati maṭte (pañcāgati, pañcaghāta?) is employed frequently in the yakshagāṇas of kannaḍa and telugu for nearly two centuries. This is simply the miniature caturaśra maṭhya tāla in fast tempo (druta laya) which has the following prosodial construction: 00001 or 00010:

ಅರಕಿಟಿ ಧಿಂ ನದಾಂ | ಕಿಟಿಟಕಿ ತರಕಿಟಿ ತಾಂ |
ಧಿನ್ಮದೇಂ ತರಕಿಟಿಟಕಿ | ತರಕಿಟಿ ಕಿಟಿಟಕಿ ತರಕಿಟಿ |

A careful analysis of the extant sulādis reveals that they may be broadly classified into some four types:

I. The first has six caranās and is represented by five tālas. This type may again be subdivided into five varieties on the basis of the following sequential arrangement in tālas:

(a) Dhruva, maṭhya, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, ādi and jati. This appears to have been the type most favoured by our haridāsa composers, since they occur in by far the largest number. The order of the tālas has been strictly maintained in them.

(b) Dhruva, maṭhya, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, eka and jati.

(c) Dhruva, maṭhya, jhampā, aṭṭa, ādi and jati.

(d) Dhruva, maṭhya, jhampā, tripuṭa, eka and jati.

(e) Dhruva, maṭhya, eka, aṭṭa, jhampā, jati.

In the last three varieties, the middle tālas are sometimes found interchanged in sequence. It should be noted that in these five varieties the ādi and eka tālas are never employed together in the same sulādi. The rūpaka tāla appears to have been omitted altogether in this class, even though the Uḍupi edition gives such instances also⁶⁷. This issue could be settled only after patient examination of authentic and early sources. It will be noticed in the above varieties that only either ādi or eka and either jhampā or tripuṭa tāla has been used. Note also the purely kannaḍa forms tivuḍe, tivaḍe, trivuḍe etc. which have exclusively replaced the classical term tripuṭa in all available manuscripts and *impressi typis*. A further important observation is that every one of these types contains the tripuṭa, jhampā or both. This must be read with Sudhākalaśa's statement⁶⁸ that the best sāḷaga sūḍas contain the tripuṭa and jhampā tālas. The inclusion of ādi tāla as a distinct entity may not appear justifiable at first sight since it is tripuṭa tāla with a caturaśra laghu. But, as will be described below, the ādi tāla was a later evolution of the jhompāta tāla by a process of inversion in practice and the name of the ādi tāla of later usage has stuck to the caranās which were probably sung to jhompāta. This tāla is regarded as quite distinct from the tripuṭa tāla by Veṅkaṭamakhi⁶⁹, in view of the difference in extent and avayava.

II. The second class of sulādis has eight caranās. These may be subdivided again into only three varieties on the basis of the tāla assignment:

67: Guru Rao, Pāvāṇje—, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 15, 54.

- (a) Dhruva, maṭhya, jhampā, rūpaka, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, ādi and jati.
- (b) Dhruva, maṭhya, eka, rūpaka, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, ādi and jati.
- (c) Dhruva, maṭhya, jhampā, rūpaka, tripuṭa, aṭṭa, eka and jati.

Here the rūpaka tāla appears to be an indispensable part of the sulādi. I have not yet noticed an exception to this. In this class, only two out of jhampā, eka and ādi tālas have been used together, but not all three. The above three varieties are derived by adding rūpaka tāla and one of these latter three tālas to each of the six-carana sulādi. Thus

I (a) + rūpaka + jhampā = II (a).

I (b) + rūpaka + ādi = II (b).

I (c) + rūpaka + jhampā = II (c).

In other words, these varieties have an inner constant core of rūpaka, tripuṭa and aṭṭa tālas besides the constant commencement of dhruva and maṭhya tālas and the constant conclusion with jati. The remaining two caranas are chosen from the above three optional tālas. Even though at least two more possibilities are available in this class, I have yet to notice such sulādis. Perhaps a wider search of manuscript material will prove more fruitful.

III. Only a few instances of sulādis consisting of all the eight tālas with jati are found. This type consists of nine caranas, so that there is no repetition of any tāla.

IV. These are sulādis in which one or more tālas are repeated once or twice. These are also few and far between. Thus in a sulādi of Parandaradāsa⁶⁸, ವ್ಯಾಸರಾದ ಜರಣಕಮಲದರ್ಶನವನಗೇನು ಜನ್ಮದ ಸುಕೃತಫಲದಿ ದೊರಕತೋ, the caranas have dhruva, maṭhya, rūpaka, jhampā, tripuṭa, dhruva, tripuṭa, aṭṭa and ādi tālas respectively, concluding as usual in the jati. Several instances of this type are available in the Udupi edition of sulādis⁶⁹. In the two sulādis noticed by Subbarāma Dikshita mentioned above, the first has the following arrangement: rūpaka, triṣra ragaṇa maṭhya, dhruva, tripuṭa and eka. The second has: ādi, khaṇḍa ragaṇa maṭhya, dhruva; ādi, rūpaka, ādi, eka and aṭṭa.

This classification is by no means complete. The sulādis were so popular with our musicians and listeners for several centuries that they have blossomed into innumerable inflorescences, full of sweetness and beauty on many a *vāggeyakāralatā*. It would be a difficult task to classify them into all the possible mathematical permutations and combinations. This difficulty has already been experienced by Kallinātha who found that the dhruvaka as well as the other six sālaga sūḍa prabandhas were changing their patterns rapidly⁶⁶ and by Tulaja⁶⁷ who was himself a composer of the sulādis of merit.

In fact, the uniform commencement of a sulādi with the dhruva and maṭhya tālas as found in nearly all the later sources appears to have been a rearrangement

68. Huchcha Rao Bengeri and Krishna Sharma Betageri, (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 7.

69. Guru Rao, Pavanje—, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 87 etc.

wrought in about the 18th century A.D. when the sūlālāṅkāras came to be fixed in sequence. It is also interesting that very few of the sūlādis in the later sources appear to be upāntaras i.e., use the optional melodic bridge called the antara between the dhruva and the ābhoga. This, again, appears to have been athetised in later practice for reasons which are mainly methodological. These two changes suggest that the sūlādis were probably subjected again to a process of alignment with theoretical or textual prescription or with empirical standards in the 18th century A.D. at the hands of the haridāsas and the regular musicologists. The athetisation of the antara would be found desirable by them to avoid the arbitrariness of musical structure its use would involve; without the antara, the form would become more rigid and compact. That the early usages of sūlādis contained the initial employment of tālas also other than the dhruva and maṭhya and the use of the antara, often more than once in the same sūlādi, becomes clear from the unquestionable evidence of a very early manuscript which will be mentioned in the concluding section of the present work. The two sūlādis offered by Subbarāma Dikshita belong to such an early tradition.

The sūlādis are, of course, sung in a single rāga set to all the carāṇas; such a traditional practice is indicated by Kṛṣṇadāsa: *sūḍaprabandhaḥ kathita ekarāganiveśitah*¹⁹ and by Pundarīka Viṭṭhala: *ete sārva dhātvekaḥ khandakāḥ*²⁰. That is, the dhātu of each sālaga sūḍa prabandha (and later, stanza) was set to the same single khaṇḍa or segment. All early sources of the sūlādis and Tulaja establish this point unequivocally. Yet we find Krishna

Rao stating (*op. cit. infra*, p. 345) that a single sūlādi may be set to more rāgas than one. Mugali asserts that Śrīpādarāya and Purandaradāsa have composed each stanza of the sūlādi in a different rāga and that this practice was modified later by Vijayadāsa into setting the entire sūlādi to a single rāga (*op. cit. infra*, p. 299). Available evidence appears to contradict these views. The melodic elements are few and conform to the theoretical requirements; these are repeated in all the carāṇas, presumably. However, in the lakshya, *hasugaḷa kareva dhvani*, the different carāṇas have different dhātus, each having a core of dhruva which is repeated to conclude it. So also is the case with the other sūlādi given by Subbarāma Dikshita. It is a pity that most of the extant manuscripts do not specify the rāgas for the sūlādis even though they were sung obviously in several rāgas. Thus one finds the sūlādis set to sāveri, śrī, devagāndhārī, bhūpāla, yarakala-kāmbhodi, nāṭi, varāḷi, śaṅkarābharaṇa, mecabauli, gaḷa, kāmbhodi, reguṭi, mukhārī, dhanyāsī, deśī, āhīri, malaharī, bhairavī, ānandabhairavī, toḍi, kalyāṇi, madhyamāvati, mohana kalyāṇi, kāṇḍa etc. It may be noticed that many of these correspond to those often described collectively as battisa rāga. These latter are a group of 32 rāgas traditionally handed down in Karnataka with a special religious significance and are mentioned and enumerated by many a kannāḍa poet, and twice by Purandaradāsa himself, in his song *tutturu tūrendu*, and *naḷinajāṇḍa taleya tūgi*²¹. It is possible that the sūlādis were originally sung to these 32 rāgas and this rule might have been relaxed later. Tulaja offers not only the

70. *Idem.*, Purandaradāsara Kīrtanagaḷu, pt. v, pp. 17, 19.

names of some of the rāgas in which sulādis were sung in his days and presumably at least some fifty years before, as well as actual extracts from their contemporary usage. This information, some three hundred years old, is quite important in reconstructing the history of the sulādis. Tulaja gives lakshyas for the sulādis in the following rāgas: śrī, śuddhanāṭi, ādradeśī, ṭakka, nādarāmakriyā, gaulipantu, gaula, malahari, varāli, rāmakriyā, śaṅkarābharāṇa, pūrvagaula, nārāyaṇadeśākshi, kedāra, bhairavi, rītigaula, hindolavasanta, mukhāri, bhūpālā⁷¹ and devagāndhārā⁷². Since these rāgas have been exactly described by him, it would be a relatively simple matter to reconstruct sulādis in them.

As to the actual mode of singing the sulādis, it must be admitted that even their rare current usage today does not elucidate or illustrate, let alone emphasize, their rhythmic bias and specific characteristics. It is deeply regretted that there does not seem to be any continuous and consistent tradition of sulādi singing even in the mādhva monasteries of Karnataka where one would expect it to be kept alive, however crudely. Quite obviously, the tradition is not extinct; it could not be, with such a rich and fertile background, abundance of available lakshya and fervent adherents to the mādhva faith. It is only that the tradition is hidden in unknown, and perhaps unlikely, soil. It is the primary duty of those who consider themselves as lovers of Karnataka music, Karnataka culture, and of mādhva philosophy and mādhva way of life to bring to light and propagate it. Thus it happens that we have to depend on Subbarāma Dīkshita for the method of sulādi singing. He states:

ಸೂಳಾದಿ : (ಸೂಡ) ಸೂಳಾದಿ ಅನ್ನದಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಾ ಲಂಕಾರ ಸಪ್ತ ಶಾಳಂಟು ಲನು, ರಗಣಸುತ್ಯಂಟುನು, ಉದ್ಗ್ರಾಹ, ಧ್ರುವ, ಅಭೋಗ ಧಾತುಪುಲತೋ ವಿಕಕಲಗಾ (ಯಥಾಪ್ರಕರಮುಗಾ) ವಿಳಂಬನುಧ್ಯಲಯಲು ಗಲವಿಮೈ ವರ್ಣಕ್ರಮಂ. ಬಾಲತೋ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ರೂಪಮೈಯುಂಡನು. ಈ ಸೂಳಾದುಲು ಶ್ರೀ ಪುರಂದರ ವಿಠಲ ದಾಸುಲವಾರುಗಾಕ ದಕ್ಕಿನವಾರವರುನು ಜೂಜಿನಟ್ಟು ಕನುಬರೇದು⁷¹

Hence the sulādi should be sung to the well known seven tālas of the modern alāṅkāra, in the melodic elements called udgrāha, dhruva and ābhoga in middle and slow tempos such that the duration of the musical note is the same as that of the corresponding syllable in the literary theme. It is essentially a liturgical piece; that is, emphasis is more on the meaning of the words rather than on music. This is, incidentally, in conformity with the earlier description by Kallinātha that out of the six elements of the prabandha, the sāḷaga sūḍas have only two: pada and tāla: *padatālabaddhatvāt dvyaṅgāḥ | tāraṇālī jātīmantah*.⁷² His description and lakshya differs from Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala's prescription of unoptional initial usage of the dhruvaka and the employment of kūṭapāṭaksharas, i.e., imitative syllables common to the paṭaha and other musical instruments⁷³. This latter practice of empolying kūṭapāṭa in the sulādis appears to have been in vogue from at least the 13th century A.D. Śārngadeva prescribes that the maṇṭha and other sāḷaga sūḍas were to be sung to accompaniment of an instumental composition called jakkā, which consisted of repeated playing of a single text of (kūṭa) pāṭa with many pauses:

71. Subbarāma Dīkshita, *op. cit.*, Saṅgītalakṣhaṇasaṅgrahamu, p. 51.

72. Kallinātha, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

ಯೋ ವಾದ್ಯತೇ ವಾದ್ಯವಿಂಚೋ ನಿರಾಮೃತಭಿರ್ಮುಖಃ |
ಯತಿರ್ಜಗತ್ಯ ಚ ಸಾ ತಜ್ಞೋರ್ವಾದ್ಯಾ ಮಂಠಾದಿಸಾಲಗೇ ||

Note the alternative name, *yati*, for the *jakkā*; this was presumably retained by the *haridāsas* at the end of the *suḷādi* as *jāti*.

Though *Subbarāma Dīkshita* mentions only the seven *suḷādi tālas* and the *ragana mathya* for the *suḷādis*, usage appears to employ one more *tāla* called *turupu jhampe*; one such instance, the *sr̥ṣṭiprakaraṇa suḷādi* of *Vijayadāsa*: *gunakāḷadeśavedajīva* has been recorded in the available *impressi typis* as containing this *tāla*. It is noteworthy that the same composition also contains the normal *jhampā tāla* and thus distinguishes it from the former. This is called *turita jampe* in *kannaḍa yakshagāna* and *turupu jampa* in *telugu yakshagāna*. This has the duration of ten *kalās* distributed into three beats. Its *pāṭa* is as follows:

ಧೀಂ | ದಿ | ನ್ನಾಂ || ತರಿಕಿಟ | ದಿ | ನ್ನಾಂ || ಕಿಟತಕ | ತರಿ | ಕಿಟತಕ ||
ತಕತರಿ | ಕಿಟ | ಕಿಟತಕ || ದಿನ್ನಾ | ಧೀಂ | ತರಿಕಿಟ || ಕಿಟತಕ | ತರಿ |
ಕಿಟದಿ | ತ್ತಾಂತಾ ತದಿಗಿಣ || ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ

Another unique *suḷādi* may be noticed here: this is the *navavidhabhakti suḷādi* of *Purandaradāsa*: *hariya om̐bhakti bhaktiya balladhira*⁷⁵. This has eleven *caranās*, devoted to the nine modes of devotional service to God, viz., *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, *smarana*, *pādasevana*, *arcana*,

73. *Sārṅgadeva, op. cit.*, VI, 953, 954, p. 429.

74. *Guru Rao, Pavañje*—, *Vijayadāsara Suḷādigalū*, Vol. II, p. 34.

75. *Huchcha Rao Bengeri and Krishna Sharma Betageri, (eds.), op. cit.*, p. 1.

vandana, *dāśya*, *sakhya*, and *ātmanivedana*. It commences with an introductory *carana* and concludes with a summary. The *tālas* have not been specifically prescribed in it, nor the *rāga*. The syllabic magnitude or prosody of the verse lines are not of much use here in inferring the *tāla*.

IX. THE EVOLUTION OF THE SULĀDI TĀLAS

The term *tāla* of Indian music, often approximately and inaccurately translated as 'time', 'time measure', 'beat' etc, may be roughly defined as a temporal device which measures out a song into divisions of constant and reasonable span of time, with a small number of definitely, uniformly and constantly placed accents in each such equal division. It is a temporal foil to the song against the uniform rhythmic background of which a predetermined or *ex tempore* cross rhythmic theme, independent or inherent in the song, may be displayed. It provides movement to the melodic theme of a song through such a function. It also bestows unity and coherence in space and time to the tonal substance of song. It confers convergence, direction and stability on the intrinsic and extrinsic rhythmic material in a song. This latter aspect of the definition of the term is high-lighted in Indian musical theory which offers ತಾಲಃ ತಲಃಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾ ಯಾಂ ಇತಿ ಧಾತೋಃ ಘಂ. ಸ್ತೃತಃ ||⁷⁶ as the etymological derivation of the word *tāla*.

The intimate relation of musical rhythm with prosodic rhythm has been recognized by the ancient Indian

76. *Sārṅgadeva, op. cit.*, V, 2, p. 3.

musicologist who borrows names of prosodial units such as the laghu, guru, pluta, mātra etc., into musical theory retaining their original connotations and relative temporal sizes, and adapts them for his purpose. Since their conventionally and arbitrarily postulated absolute values in prosody would provide a span too short for musical purposes, he has offered them a flexible size in terms of eka-, dvi- and catuṣkalās⁷⁷. The tālas of ancient Indian music were divided into mārḡa and deśī varieties⁷⁸. The former served as standards of reference with respect to unit time and span and also served as basis for further derivation by permutation and combination of their component organs. These are five in number : caccatpuṭa, SSIS', cācapuṭa, SISS', śaṭpitāputraka, S'SSIS', sampakveshṭāka, S'SSSS' and udghaṭṭa, SSS, where I, S, S' denote a laghu, a guru and a pluta respectively. The laghu has the duration of five short syllables, the guru has twice the duration of the laghu while the pluta has three times the duration of the laghu. Through a difference in the number and arrangement of these component organs, the druta, denoted by 0 (half in duration of the laghu) and the virāma, denoted by ' (half in duration of the just precedent organ) and the rarely used kākapāda (also called hamsapāda), denoted by + (four times the duration of the laghu), a large number of secondary tālas are built up. These latter are called deśī tālas. Tālas are again divided in ancient Indian musical theory into tryaśra and caturaśra⁷⁹; these two form respectively the framework for

77. *Ibid.*, V, 81. 21 *et seq.*, p. 9 *et seq.*

78. *Ibid.*, V, 3, 4, p. 4.

79. *Ibid.*, V, 17, p. 9.

triple and quadruple movement. An extension of this principle was practised somewhat implicitly to obtain quintuple movement (khaṇḍa gati). The unit of time for all the tālas was the mātrā, which, by definition, had the duration required for the utterance of five short syllables:

ನಿಮೇಷಾಃ ಪಂಚ ವಿಜ್ಞೇಯತಾಃ ಸ್ವರಾಃ ಸ್ವರಾಃ ಸ್ವರಾಃ | 80

These syllables were ka, ca, ṭa, ta and pa by convention⁸¹.

The mārḡa tālas were distinguished by equating the laghu to the mātrā and by a rigorous adherence to this prescription. In the deśī tālas, the mātrā was gradually transformed by insistent and persistent practice into a duration of four short syllables⁸² as this is by far the most natural and comprehensive unitary interval on the basis of which, or against the background of which other temporal movements can be derived or displayed. While the laghu became synonymous with the mārḡa tālas, it had the variable size of four, five or six syllabic duration in the deśī tālas. These were respectively called, manushya, deśya and divya laghus⁸³. Some misconceptions are currently prevalent regarding the deśī tālas. These are commonly called mārḡa tālas, probably because of their antiquity and obsolescence. The term mārḡa has a clear, theoretical function to perform in our musical theory besides denoting archaism and should not be misapplied. Only the above five have been named mārḡa tālas in our

80. Bharata, Nāṭyaśāstra, XXXI, 3.

81. Kallinātha, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-142.

82. Govinda, Polūri-, *op. cit.*, V, 81, pp. 184-185.

music by tradition and textual authority. Again, it is frequently held that the *deśī* tālas were, and should be employed only for purposes of dance and not for classical music. Ample manuscript and textual evidence is available to disprove such a contention.

The 14th and 15th centuries A.D. may be termed the watershed in the history of Indian music. This period reveals both a conceptual revolution and a renaissance of fundamental values and mark out new frontiers in the practice of music. This is reflected in the theory and practice of the tāla also. The *mārga* tālas gradually began to fade away from vogue and the *deśī* tālas held the stage almost completely. There was considerable variation in the practice of these tālas. The same name often denoted different structures and different structures, the same name⁸¹. The *virāma* (later called the *anudruta*), was not postulated by the ancients such as Bharata, Dattila and Maṭaṅga as an organ of the tāla; it was left undescribed by Sārṅgadeva⁸² but was slowly creeping into practice in the day of Simhabhūpāla:

ಅನುದ್ರುತಾದಯೋಃ ಸಿ ಭೇದಾಃ ಕೃತ್ವಿದುಕ್ತಾಃ | ತೇ ಭರತಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋ-
ಗೇಷು, ಗ್ರಂಥೇಚಾನುಕ್ತಾತ್ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯೇಷ್ಯಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧತ್ವಾತ್ ಜೋಷೇತ್ತಿತ್ಯಾಃ⁸³
and became the subject of a raging controversy during the life of Kallinātha⁸⁴. Again, the *laghu* was being used with a variable size, especially in the middle of the 15th century A.D.⁸⁵ These factors were reconciled to theory

83. Note however, that Someśvara (*op. cit.*, XVI, 4, 84) describes the duration of one quarter of a *mātrā* and calls it *drutaka* or *bindu*.

84. Simhabhūpāla, *op. cit.*, on V, 16, p. 8.

by Kallinātha who states that such variations in the *laghu* are the essence and attraction of all *deśī* art and not a demerit, and that the use of the *virāma* is allowed by theory only in the form of an uncounted appendage of the just precedent organ and never as a distinct, individual organ of a tāla, and that the similarity in the structural pattern, but not merely the absolute value of the temporal span, was, and should be, the criterion for determining the usage and individuality of a tāla⁸⁶. These two idiosyncracies in practice were firmly established by the 17th and 18th centuries A.D. and actually culminated into a tenet of theory. The *virāma*, which was regarded as an uncounted appendage of the just precedent organ, assuming half the duration of the latter, was given an independent and distinct status in the composition of the tāla, with one quarter of a four-syllable *mātrā* as its size. The *laghu* remained, as in the days of Sārṅgadeva, the basis of defining and determining the composition of a tāla, but it obtained wider range and scope, being classified into the five *jātis*, *tryaśra*, *caturaśra*, *khaṇḍa*, *miśra* and *saṅkirṇa*, having respectively the duration of six (later, three), four, five, seven and nine syllables⁸⁷. The *tryaśra* *laghu* of six syllables changed into that of three in this transition period. Thus 'lālakalāvilāsa:

ಅನುದ್ರುತೋ ದ್ರುತಃ ಲಘುರ್ಗುರೂ ತತಃ ಪರಮ್ |
ಪ್ಲುತಂ ಚೇತಿ ಕ್ರಮೇಣೈವ ತಾಲಾಂಗಾನಿ ಚ ಪಂಚಧಾ |
ಪಂಸಪಾದಂ ಕಾಕಪಾದಂ ಪಷ್ಠಾಂಗಂ ಕೇಚಿದೂಚರೇ |
ಚತುರ್ಭಲಫಲಫುರ್ಭಯುಕ್ತಂ ನಿಶಬ್ಧೇ ಚಿತ್ರತಾಲಕೇ |
ಚತುರ್ವರ್ಣೈಸ್ತೃಭಿರ್ವರ್ಣೈಃ ಸಪ್ತವರ್ಣೈಶ್ಚ ಪಂಚಭಿಃ |
ನವವರ್ಣೈಃ ಲಘುರ್ಭಿಃ ಚತುರಶ್ರಾದಿ ಜಾತಿಮಾನ್ |

85. Govinda, Polūrī—, *op. cit.*, V, 79, 80, pp. 183-184.

ಯಥಾ ಚತುರಶ್ರಃ ಚತುರ್ವರ್ಣಃ | ತ್ರೈಶ್ರಸ್ತ್ರಿವರ್ಣಃ | ಮಿಶ್ರಃ ಸ್ವರವರ್ಣಃ |
ಪಂಚವರ್ಣಃ ಮಿಂಚಃ | ನವವರ್ಣಃ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣಃ | ಅತ್ರ ವರ್ಣ ಇತಿ ಲಘುಃ |
ಮಾರ್ಗಕಾಲೇ ಪಂಚವರ್ಣೋ ಲಘುಃ |⁸⁶

Convention and theoretical considerations ruled that the caturaśra jāti could not be applied to such tālas as had a virāma in them⁸⁷. The works of Polūri Govinda and Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala throw interesting light on this important phase of our musical evolution.

It is a paradox that the very limitless variety and wide range of possibilities which prompted the deśī tālas into existence and abundant usage should have tolled the knell of their departure into oblivion. Yet their history bears eloquent testimony that such was the case. The impossibility of systematizing or standardizing them, the complex prescription of saśabda and niḥśabda kriyās, the over-elaboration of secondary rules for their use, confusion and indeterminacy in the use of the laghu and the virāma, inconveniently large temporal spans, the use of the kākāpāda, the growing preponderance of fancy rather than musical value in the creation of these tālas and many other similar practical deficiencies chased the deśī tālas out of currency. However, they left a legacy of conceptual and rhythmic material which contained none of these deficiencies but had the strength and attraction of simplicity, convenience, compactness and adequacy. It is gratifying that this material was developed into a specific, unequivocal, enduring and memorable contribution by Karnataka.

86. Paramēśvara (?), *Tālakalavilāsa*, cit. Acyutarāya, *Tāla-kalāvāridhi*, extr. Ramakrishna Kavi, op. cit., p. 250.

87. Govinda, Polūri—, op. cit., V, 134, p. 201.

The prabandhas of medieval Indian music were often divided into rāga-prabandhas and tāla-prabandhas by virtue of specific association by tradition in usage of a particular rāga or tāla. The sulādis, sanskritized into sūḍādi-prabandhas, belonged to the latter class. They were developed by the vaiṣṇava saint musicians of the dāsakūṭa of Karnataka into an enduring and beautiful pattern and by a host of their school too numerous to mention here. The term sulādi is, as has been shown above, unambiguously of kannaḍa origin and derives from the root *suḷ*, meaning *to sound* and *to occur in a predetermined order*. Though these prabandhas were known since ancient times, those of the sāḷaga sūḍa variety, namely, the dhruva, maṇṭha, pratimaṇṭha, niḥśārūka, rāsaka, aḍḍatālī, and ekatālī were specially favoured by the dāsakūṭa and were adapted to suit their literary needs. This adaptation consisted essentially of simplification, sweeping away of superfluous detail of variation, and application of a number of modified deśī tālas in a definite and fixed order to these songs. Since the discursive content of these songs was the dominating interest, the melodic and rhythmic themes had to assume a secondary and subservient role. Thus, since the words were, more or less, chanted in these songs in a nibaddha way to a simple dhātu, the temporal span had to be short, with a minimum of simply but adequately placed accents. These eliminated altogether the use of the niḥśabda kriyās and were displayed entirely in terms of the sounded beat, i.e., *cāpu* (hence the name *cāpu tālas*). Since the tālas were also fixed in order for occurrence in these songs the name sulādi is doubly appropriate. The signal service of these great songsters consisted of removing the widely prevalent

confusion regarding the laghu and the virāma, the adoption and adaptation of specific *deśī tālas* from the vast melange of practice with a skill and forethought which is eloquently witnessed by the triumph of these *tālas* over the ravages of Time and by their exclusive current usage today. Setting aside all textual or conventional prescription of *deśī tālas* for the *prabandhas*, they gradually replaced the earlier prescriptions by (1) *pratimaṭhya IIS'*, (2) *baddhāpaṇa*, also called *aḍḍatālī* or *tripuṭa 101* and *011* respectively, (3) *yatilagna 01*, (4) *jhampā 10'0*, (5) *dvitīya* or *turaṅga 001*, (6) *kuḍukkā* or *prati 0011*, or *varṇayati 1100* and (7) *eka* or *ādi I* or *0—tālas*⁸⁸ and renamed them *dhruva*, *maṭhya*, *rūpaka*, *jhampā*, *tripuṭa*, *aṭṭa* and *eka tālas* respectively because these were exclusively associated with the *gītas* i.e., *sulādis* traditionally and currently. That such an ancient tradition existed in Karnataka has been already shown above^{19, 25, 55}. They also added three others to these staple *tālas*: the *jhompaṭa* (the inverted present *ādi tāla*), *ragaṇa maṭhya*, and the *turupu jhampe*. The *sulādi* was, and still is, an *yathākshara prabandha*.

These *dāsakūṭa* composers were instrumental in establishing these *tālas* in vogue almost to the exclusion of all other *tālas* even in their own times. Their work was facilitated by the enviable royal patronage of the Vijaya-

⁸⁸ The description of these *tālas* have been eclectically extracted from [a] Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, V. 236-312, pp. 134-160. [b] Nandikesvara, *Bharatārṇava*, VII, 430-492, pp. 202-262. [c] Nārada-Saṅgītamakaranda, *Nṛtyādhyaḥya*, II and III. [d] Jagadekamalla, *op. cit.* Ms. in the Sri Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts Library, Mysore, and [e] Gopatiṇḍra, *Tāladīpika*, Ms. in the Manuscripts Library of Sri Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts, Mysore.

nagar emperors who witnessed the acme of the glory of South India. The result was enduring for at least four reasons:

(1) The times badly needed such a change and the propagation of these *tālas* was aided by their simplicity, adequacy and easy applicability to both classical and applied music.

(2) The propagators were large in number, worked with a religious zeal and devotion and had the backing of both the royalty which was far reaching in influence and range and also of the ordinary teacher and composer.

(3) These propagators produced so huge a number of compositions exclusively in these *tālas* and established them in practice, that those set to other *tālas* gradually melted away into an ever decreasing minority.

(4) The songs of the *dāsakūṭa* contain so much valuable moral, ethical, spiritual, ritual and religious material, and often are the epitomes of the *vedas* and *upanishads*—Purandaradāsa's works are, in fact, collectively called 'Purandaropanishat'—besides containing important material from the *mantra śāstra* and the *yoga śāstra*, that they were cherished and perpetuated by posterity for these values in addition to their musical value and excellence.

Limitation of space does not permit us a detailed study of the fascinating history of these *tālas* here. So I will be content with briefly tracing their evolution into their present form as gleaned from three major authorities: Pundarīka Viṭṭhala, Polūri Govinda and Veṅkaṭamakhi. It is Pundarīka Viṭṭhala who mentions, for the first time

as well as names and describes the present sulādi tālas with all the five laghu jāti variations and gives an important orientation in theory regarding these⁸⁹. Ramakrishna Kavi asserts that these sulādi tālas are mentioned by Arjuna and Hanūmān, but leaves this statement unsupported⁹⁰. His manuscript sources appear to be of questionable antiquity for such a statement. Polūri Govinda gives the following structures for the sulādi tālas: dhruva, ISO, maṭhya 101, rūpaka 01, jhampā 0UI, tripuṭa 000', aṭṭa 1001, and eka, 0⁹¹. It may be noticed here that the two consecutive (initial and final) laghus of our present dhruva tāla are fused into a guru so that the latter laghu is not accented; the order of the organs in the jhampā tāla is inverted; what we now regard as a laghu of three kalās in tripuṭa tāla started its career as a viramānta druta but obtained at the hands of Govinda a double accent on the first and the third kalās; finally, his aṭṭa tāla was transformed into its present form through the contiguity of the initial and final laghus. In fact, he has himself incorporated these changes in the sulādi tālas in his later work, Rāgatālacintāmaṇi⁹². Govinda makes the further interesting observation that tālas containing the anudruta, i.e., tripuṭa and jhampā tālas cannot have a caturaśra laghu. They can thus have only four jātis each, while the remaining five can be reckoned in all the five jātis, thus making a total of

89. Puṇḍarīka Viṭṭhala, *op. cit.*, Ms. in Mss. Lib. of Sri Varalakshmi Academics of Fine Arts, Mysore.

90. Ramakrishna Kavi, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

91. Govinda, Polūri-, Tāladasapranādīpikā, 86, 87, p. 63.

92. *Idem*, Rāgatālacintāmaṇi, V, 133, 134, pp. 200, 201.

thirtythree, in stead of thirtyfive tālabhedas⁹³. There is indeed a flood of light in the transitional state of these tālas in his Rāgatālacintāmaṇi and Tāladasapranādīpikā. Thus, he states that the virāma, instead of being the uncounted appendage of the just precedent organ, emerged as an independent entity and was equated to the anudruta. The anudruta and the druta were no more regarded in terms of the duration of the laghu, but were assigned absolute durations of one quarter and one half of the four-syllable mātrā, i.e., a duration of one and two syllables respectively⁹⁴. The nascent state of the anudruta is clear from the above stipulation regarding the jātis.

The reason for such a restriction is not far to seek. Besides the above equation, the anudruta also served an entirely different purpose; it was defined as the period of rest following a tālakriyā: *kriyānantaraviśrāntirūpatvād bhinnakālasca* (Kallinātha, *op. cit.*, p. 141). When these concepts were forged into a rigid form so that the anudruta had a clear cut definition and duration, its scope was also restricted. Clearly, it could not follow large temporal spans; if it did, it would introduce asymmetry into the structure and would also introduce difficulties of manipulating in higher speeds (kāla). Hence it was omitted from the deśī tālas. It is noteworthy that it has been inserted into only such sulādi tālas as have (in current usage) only one lagu and at least one druta. In tripuṭa tāla, 000', it serves as the drutavirāma while in the jhampā tāla, 0UI, it serves as the anudruta, being equal

93. *Idem*, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*, Tāladasapranādīpikā, 89, 90, p. 64.

94. *Idem*, *ibid.*, *inter alia*.

in temporal value. In both the cases, it follows a druta. It cannot follow a laghu in the sulādi tālas as virāma in the trīśra, khaṇḍa, miśra and saṅkīrṇa laghus because it would give an impracticable fractional value and in the caturaśra laghu because it would then be equivalent to the trīśra laghu in dvikalā. It cannot follow a laghu as the anudruta; for, the trīśra and caturaśra laghus would be transformed into caturaśra and khaṇḍa laghus respectively, while the khaṇḍa, miśra and saṅkīrṇa laghus would become the equivalents of trīśra, caturaśra and khaṇḍa laghus in dvikalā. (In the case of the modern jhampā tāla, where in the anudruta follows the laghu, the problem has been solved by accenting the former.) This latter situation has been ineffectually and pseudo-theoretically covered in recent works (Cf. Gānabhāskaramu by K. V. Srinivasa Iyengar, *inter alia*) by naming the laghus with six, eight, ten, eleven, etc. counts as mālā or saṅkara laghus. This is the reason why the anudruta came to be associated originally with the druta alone in the sulādi ālas.

Further, the caturaśra tripuṭa tāla is similar to the jhompāta tāla; the caturaśra jhampā tāla is similar to the trīśra tripuṭa tāla except that the second druta in the latter is left unaccented. It is to avoid morphological confusion and to maintain the individualities of the jhompāta tāla and the trīśra tripuṭa tāla that the caturaśra jāti was proscribed from these. The tripuṭa tāla, 000', having no laghu, could not be permuted by jātibheda. Hence the final drutavirāma was transformed into an initial trīśra laghu. This facilitated the uniform application of the principle of the jāti for all the tālas. Again, the

jhompāta came to be identified later with our present ādi tāla by inversion. Thus the above restriction was replaced by the *jātibheda tattva* in our musical practice. The musicians and musicologists of the 15th to the 17th centuries, A.D. must be congratulated on their methodological insight and achievement in this matter.

Again, the trīśra jāti laghu with its former duration of six syllables was reduced by practical exponents into half this value. As is natural in such states of transition, there was an attempt at reconciling ancient theory with current trends of practice, as is evident in the retention, at least in theory, of three types of laghu: that of six syllables, derived from the earlier tryaśra tālas, was called deva laghu; that with five syllables, derived from the classical mātṛā, was called deśya laghu; that of four syllables, which enjoyed exclusive current usage, was called the manushya laghu. Depending on the use of such laghus, Govinda divides the sulādi tālas into mārṅa and deśya varieties, assigning the former, as usual, to celestial use and only the latter for mortals⁹⁵. In an overall estimation of this phase, it may be noted that the laghu was in its final stages of standardization into four syllables, the virāma and the druta had already clearly emerged as distinct entities; though the number of each kind of organ was fixed in the construction of a tāla, the sequence of such organs was still in a fluid condition and that the trīśra laghu of three syllables, which was postulated just about now, was still occasionally represented by the combination of a druta and anudruta, as in the case of the tripuṭa tāla.

95. *Iḍhem.*, Rāgatalacintāmaṇi, V, 81, pp. 184, 185.

However, it is from Veṅkaṭamakhi that we find the clear origins of our present sulādi tālas even more. Indeed, it is he that first associates varṇa-alāṅkāras with the sulādi tālas so that the term alāṅkāra is synonymously understood today with the sulādi tālas. As a matter of fact, these very alāṅkāras have been retained now with but few modifications. The value of his descriptions lies in his assigning a definite duration in the form of a number of syllables to the various organs in each sulādi tāla, so that the structure of each of these tālas is crystal clear. Besides the above sulādi tālas, he also describes the jhompāṭa having the structure 001 where the laghu has four syllables, so that by gradual inversion, which commenced even in his days, it emerged as our ādi tāla. Next, in the case of the dhruva and jhampā tālas, he describes two varieties depending on their use in dance or in classical music. Thus the nāṭyadaṇḍī dhruva had a laghu of four syllables, followed by a guru of ten syllables, so having only two accents, on the first and fifth syllables respectively. This corresponds to the dhruva tāla described by Polūri Govinda in the Tāḷadaśapraṇāḍī-pikā and points to its fluidity in contemporary use. Note also that this tāla makes use of laghus of four and five syllables, thus admitting a possibility of contiguous quadruple and quintuple movement. The vīṇādaṇḍī dhruva, on the other hand, had two successive laghus of four syllables each, followed by a laghuśekhara of six syllables, thus having three accents on the first, fifth and ninth syllables respectively. The credit of reviving the earlier concept of laghuśekhara in a tangible form must thus go to Makhi. Note that this form of

dhruva tāla corresponds to our own except that there is an inversion and that the druta is not accented. Even though the nāṭyadaṇḍī dhruva had theoretical sanction, the vaiṇikas, Veṅkaṭamakhi says, preferred that of the three accents since the rhythmic display has greater possibilities in the latter. Similarly, the nāṭyadaṇḍī jhampā had an anudruta of one syllable, then a druta of two syllables, and finally a laghuśekhara of seven syllables. It is obvious, then, that the laghuśekhara was regarded in his times as a separate unitary organ of a variable size. The vāggeyakāra jhampā had the same size of ten syllables, but was divided only into two accents: a virāmānta druta of three syllables followed by a laghuśekhara of seven syllables. The nāṭyadaṇḍī was the theoretically approved standard; nevertheless, the practical exponents such as the vaiṇikas preferred the variety with the three dhātus for the same reason as above. Even though the sequence of organs in the dhruva and jhampā tālas is given as above in the Caturdaṇḍīprakāśikā, their illustrations correspond exactly to their modern compeers. Stipulating the laghu of four syllables, the druta of two syllables and anudruta of one syllable, the structure of the other sulādi tālas according to Veṅkaṭamakhi may be written down as follows: maṭhya 011, rūpaka 01, tripuṭa 000', aṭṭa 0011, and eka 0.⁴ It will be observed that in the maṭhya and aṭṭa tālas, the sequence has suffered a change because of the contiguity of the initial and final laghus. Similarly, the trīśra laghu of our tripuṭa tāla still continues to be composed of a virāmānta druta, i.e., three syllables with an initial accent. It may be recalled here that the tripuṭa tāla in its cāpu form is

sometimes even today displayed with two consecutive accents of two kalās each followed by an unaccented 'husi' of three kalās. It is also of interest that in the above arrangements the organs are placed in the order of increasing sizes. This logical arrangement underwent a transformation into their present forms due to the desire for raktilābha of the vaiṇikas. Venkaṭamakhi points out that this inversion of the order of the organs was evident in his own times :

ಯದೃಶ್ಯವನುಕಾರಾ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವರ್ತನಿ ಸಂಪ್ರತಿ |
ಉಕ್ತಲಕ್ಷಣಮಾರ್ಗೇಣ ದೃಶ್ಯತೇ ನೈವ ಕುತ್ರಚಿತ್ |
ತಥಾಪ್ಯನಾಗತಾತಿತಸಮಾಖ್ಯಾನಗ್ರಹತ್ರಯಮ್ |
ಅನುಸೃತ್ಯೇಹ ವೀಣಾಯಾಂ ರಕ್ತಿಲೋಭೇನವೈಚಕ್ಯಃ |
ಲಘುದ್ರುತಾದೇರಧುನಾ ಪೌರ್ವಾಪರ್ಯಂ ಸಮಾಶ್ರಿತಮ್ ||⁹⁶

This change was firmly established in practice during Tulaja's time and these tālas were reigning supreme in their present forms during the advent of the Musical Trinity of South India. It may be noted in passing that the eka tāla of one druta, due to its low possibility of yield of rakti was altered into the deśī (not our) ādi tāla according to Venkaṭamakhi :

ಏಕತಾಲೇನ ಯುಕ್ತಪಾದೇಕತಾಲಃ ಪ್ರಕೀರ್ತಿತಃ |
ಏಕದ್ರುತೇನೈಕತಾಲ ಏಕತಾಲಸ್ಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣಮ್ |
ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀ ರತ್ನಿದಾನೀಮೇತಾದ್ಯಗೇಕತಾಲೋ ನ ರಕ್ತಿದಃ |
ಇತ್ಯೇಕತಾಲಸ್ಥಾನೇ ಸ್ಥಿತ್ವಾ ದಿತಾಲೋ ನಿವೇಶಿತಃ |
ಆದಿತಾಲೇ ತ್ವೇಕಲಘುಶ್ಚ ಕುರಕ್ಷರಸಂಮಿತಃ ||⁹⁷

though it is equally probable that the original eka tāla of one druta or one laghu or of one guru as defined by

Nānyadeva was restricted to one laghu and retained in practice under the same name. This is actually called ekatālī, a variety of bhaṅga tāla :

ದ್ರುತೇನ ಲಘುನಾ ವಾಪಿ ಗುರುಷ್ಯಕೇನ ವಾ ಭವೇತ್ |
ಏಕೈಕೈರೇವ ಪತನ್ಯೇರೇಕತಾಲೇ ತ್ರಿಧಾ ಭವೇತ್ ||⁹⁸

It should also be noted that the present ādi tāla is an inversion of the jhompaṭa tāla and has no correspondence with its archaic namesake. So also the eka tāla. The present ādi tāla, may however, be regarded as derived by combining one āvarta of the archaic ādi tāla and two āvartas of the archaic eka tāla.

Besides the above, two other tālas are found used in our music; these are the deśyādi and madhyādi tālas. These have come into vogue only since the last century, especially used in Tyāgarāja's songs. It is easily seen that these are only different forms of ādi tāla wherein the accents appear differently because of a difference in arrangement.

There is an interesting reference to what is called sulādi tāla in Nārada's Saṅgītamakaranda :

ಪುತ್ರೌ ಗುರುರ್ಲಘುಶ್ಚೈವ ಸುಲಾದಿರಭಿಧೀಯತೇ ||

This is enumerated as one of the ten varieties of tāla prabandhas, i.e., prabandhas which are restricted to specific tālas. Nārada also makes another illuminating observation :

ಧ್ರುವಾ ಮತಾ ಪ್ರತಿಮತಾ ಲಂಭಕೋ ರಾಸಕಸ್ತಥಾ |
ಆಸ್ವತಾಲಶ್ಚೈಕತಾಲಃ ಸುಲಾದೀತ್ಯುಚ್ಯತೇ ಬುಧೈಃ ||⁹⁹

98. Nānyadeva. Sarasvatīhrdayalāṅkārahāra, ext. Ramakrishna Kavi, op. cit., p. 92.

99. Nārada, op. cit., Nṛtyādhyaṃya, III, 8.

100. Ibid., III, 18.

96. Venkaṭamakhi, op. cit., III, 114-116, p. 132.

97. Ibid., III, 108-110, p. 31.

and concludes this passage with the colophon: *laghu sulādiḥ*. If this statement can be relied upon, this takes back the origin of the term *sulādi* to considerable antiquity and also establishes that these eight represented the abbreviated form of the *sulādi*. This might have inspired the *haridāsas* to evolve the *sulādi* by athetisation as discussed above. But this is not conclusive because the *impressi typis* of the *Saṅgītamakaranda* is highly corrupt and amorphous as I have discussed elsewhere.¹⁰¹ Finally, *Veṅkaṭamakhi* says that the *sulādi tālas* had chased out all their *deśi* and *mārga* cousins completely from practice in his days.

Tulaja traces the final epoch in the history of these *sulādi tālas*, when he points out apparent discrepancies of the *sulādi prabandhas* in theory and practice and tries to reconcile them. He points out that these are no discrepancies at all, but old principles appearing in new garbs. He states that *sulādis* were being composed in large numbers in his days, including his own compositions and that these were both famous and popular. He pays glowing and deserved tributes to *Vyāsarāya* and *Purandaradāsa* and others of the *haridāsakūṭa*, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude for an adequate, simple and elegant *tāla* system.

X. THE SULĀDI NṚTTA

Reference has already been made to the fact that *prabandhas*, *vṛttas* and *nṛttas* often derived their names

101. Sathyanarayana, R. (ed.), *Abhinava Bharatasārasaṅgraha*, Introduction, pp. lix, lx.

from that of a single *tāla* in the history of our music. This is a natural corollary of the basic theorem in Indian music that *tāla* is the device which equates *gīta*, *vādyā* and *nṛtta* and is also their foundation in rhythmic structure and configuration :

ತಾಲಸ್ತಲಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಾ ಯಾಮತಿ ಧಾತೋಃ ಘಟಾ ಸ್ವರಃ |

ಗೀತಂ ವಾದ್ಯಂ ತಥಾ ನೃತ್ಯಂ ಯು (?ಯ) ತಸ್ತಲೇ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಿತಮ್ | 102

It is not generally known that the *sulādi* has been closely associated with a specific dance form in Karnataka and elsewhere. The quotation from *Govindavaidya* cited above¹⁰¹ is an instance of this. This form has been called *sulādi nṛtta* and has been described by the foremost musicologists of the 17th and 18th centuries A.D. *Catura Dāmodara* is probably the first writer (c 1620 A.D.) to describe this dance under this name; it consisted of dance performed in different tempos set to the seven *sulādi tālas* the in prescribed order employing sophisticated footwork, hand gestures and body movements. Thus the *dhruva nṛtya* is described :

ಧ್ರುವೇಣ ಚಿಚ್ಚತ್ವಾರಾಂಶಂ ಪೂರ್ವಂ ಪೂರ್ವವದಾಚರೇತ್ |

ಕರಣೈರ್ವೇಷ್ಠಿತಾದ್ಯೈಶ್ಚ ಕೃತಾಂಗಪರಿವರ್ತನಮ್ |

ದಕ್ಷಿಣಾದಿ ಕ್ರಮಾನ್ ಕುರ್ವನ್ ಸಮಾನುಭಯತೋ ಗತೀನ್ |

ನೃತ್ಯೇದ್ ಧ್ರುವೇಣಾಭಿನಯಂ ಹಸ್ತಕೈಃ ಸುಮನೋಹರಮ್ |

ಉದ್ಗ್ರಾಹಾಭೋಗಸ್ಯತ್ಯಂತೇ ಉದ್ಗ್ರಾಹಾದೌ ಸಮಾಪಯೇತ್ | 103

The *pātra* here paints his body and is suitably embellished. He dances to the right and to the middle front in two movements and displays beautiful and plentiful hand gestures. Note that the dance follows the structure of

102. *Acyutarāya*, *op.cit.*, *extr.* *Ramakrishna Kavi*, *op.cit.*, p. 246.

103. *Dāmodara*, *Catura*., *Saṅgītarpaṇam*, VII, 221-223, p. 220.

the dhruvaka prabandha described above. The dance thus has an udgrāha, followed by ābhoga and is concluded with the dhruva which is the first segment of the udgrāha. The pātra now dances the maṇṭha nṛtya thus:

ಮಂಕಸ್ಯ ಸಕೃತ್ಸತ್ಯೇ ಉದ್ಗ್ರಾಹಂ ಮಂತಾಲತಃ |
ದ್ವಿಸ್ತಿಶ್ಚತುರ್ವಾ ಧ್ರುವಕಮಾಭೋಗಸ್ತು ಸಕೃದ್ಧದಾ |
ವಿಚಿತ್ರಹಸ್ತಕೈರ್ನ್ಯಾಸಂ ಧ್ರುವಾದಾಪುನರಾಚರೇತ್ |
ಯೋಜ್ಯಂ ತದಾ ಮಂಕಸ್ಯತ್ಯಂ ಸೌಷ್ಠವಾಧಿಸ್ತಿ ತಂ ಶುಭಮ್ || 104

The maṇṭha dance is performed to the udgrāha sung once in maṇṭha tāla. The dhruva element is danced to twice, three-or four times; then the ābhoga, once. The dance concludes with a display of attractive hand gestures. The maṇṭha nṛtya is auspicious and has a preponderance of an element called saushṭhava. This is a stationary pose in which the waist and knees are in the same line; elbows, shoulders and head are also aligned, the chest is high and the body is restful:

ಕಟೀಜಾನುಸಮಾ ಯತ್ರ ಕೋರ್ಪರಾಂಶಶಿರಃ ಸಮಮ್ |
ಉರಃ ಸಮುನ್ನತಂ ಸನ್ನಂ ಗಾತ್ರಂ ತತ್ಸೌಷ್ಠವಂ ಭವೇತ್ |
ಸನ್ನಂ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಾನವಿಕ್ರಾಂತಂ ನಿಷಣ್ಡಂ ತ್ವಚಲಸ್ತಿತಿ |
ಚಲಸಾದಮನತ್ಯುಜ್ಜಮಜಂಜಲಮಕುಬ್ಜಕಮ್ || 105

Thus in the saushṭhava the different organs are in their natural positions in a natural state—i.e., neither too high nor too short and are immobile. Dāmodara then describes the rūpaka nṛtya:

ರೂಪಕೇ ತು ಯದೋದ್ಗ್ರಾಹಾಭೋಗಯೋರ್ಗೀತಯೋದ್ಗ್ರಾಹತಮ್ |
ತತೋ ನೃತ್ಯೇತ್ ಧ್ರುವೇ ಗೀತಂ ಪ್ರತಾದಿಲಯಸಂಯುತಮ್ |
ತದಾ ರೂಪಕಸ್ಯತ್ಯಂ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ಹಾಕೇ ರೂಪಕಸಂಜ್ಞಕೇ || 106

104. *Ibid.*, VII, 223–225, p. 220.

105. Sāringadeva, *op. cit.*, VII, 1037–1039, p. 321.

106. Dāmodara, *Gatara-*, *op. cit.*, VII, 225, 226, p. 220.

The rūpaka nṛtta is set to the rūpaka tāla: in it are first sung the udgrāha and ābhoga parts of the song in fast tempo; then the dhruva is sung in fast, middle and slow tempos; dance is performed to this.

The jhampā is danced to a song in the middle tempo and to the front. It consists of long strides; the dancer performs a lāsyaṅga called kalāsa with his hands. The kalāsa has an antarā

ಝಂಪಾತಾಳೇ ಗೀಯಮಾನೇ ಮಧ್ಯಮಾನೇನ ನರ್ತಕಃ |
ಯದಿ ನೃತ್ಯೇತ್ ಸಮಾ ಚೇದಂ ದೂರಸಾದಾಕಾಂಡಮ್ |
ಲಸತ್ ಕಲಾಸಲಾಸ್ಯಾಂಗೋ ಯೋ ನಟಃ ಪಾಣಭಿಸ್ತದಾ |
ಝಂಪಾತಾಳಾದಿನೃತ್ಯಂ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ಕಲಾಸ್ಯರಾಂತರಾನ್ವಿತಮ್ || 107

The kalāsa consists of the hand gestures like the patāka, of the duration of a pluta, made horizontal and vertical, like lightning among the inky clouds:

ಮೇಘಶಂಕೃತೌ ಯಥಾ ವಿದ್ಯುಚ್ಛಕ್ತಾಸ್ತಿ ಸಚಮತ್ಕೃತಿಃ |
ತಥಾ ಯತ್ರ ಪತಾಕಾದೀನ್ ಪ್ಲುತಮಾನಕೃತಾನ್ ಕರಾನ್ |
ತೀರ್ಥಗೂರ್ಧಮಧೋಭಶ್ಚೇದಾರಾದಾತಸ್ತತಿ ನಟೇ |
ವಿಭಾತಿ ವಿದ್ಯುದಾದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಕಲಾಸಃ ಸ ತದೋದಿತಃ || 108

As a deśī lāsyaṅga, it consists of a concluding equation of song, tempo, tāla and dance:

ಗೀತಾಂತೇ ಸ್ಥಾಪನಂ ಚಾಪಿ ಲಯತಾಲಸಮಂ ಬುಧೈಃ |
ಕಲಾಸಾ(?-ಸೋ) ಕಠಿತಗ್ನೋಯಂ ನೃತ್ತಸ್ಯಾಪಿ ಸಮಾಪ್ತಿಕ್ಯತ್ || 109

107. *Ibid.*, VII, 227, 228, p. 220, 221.

108. Aśokamalla, *cit.*, Ramakrishna Kavi, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

109. Devaṅṇabhaṭṭa, Saṅgītamuktāvalī, *avir.* Ramakrishna Kavi, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

It also consists of imitative vocalised syllables of various musical instruments in three tempos :

ಘನಾದ್ಯಕ್ಷರೈರ್ಯುಕ್ತೋ ಮಾನತ್ರಯಮನೋಹರಃ |
ನಾನಾನಾದ್ಯಕ್ಷರೈಃ ಸಮ್ಯಕ್ ರಂಜಿತಃ ಪ್ರತಿಭಾಸ್ವಿತಃ |
ಧಾಂತೋಂಧಿಧಿಗಿನಾಂತೋ ಹಿ ಶಬ್ದಖಂಡೋ ಮನೋರಮಃ |
ಗೀತಾಲಾನುಗೋ ತಷ್ಟೈಃ ಕಲಾಸಃ ಪರಿಕೀರ್ತಿತಃ || 110

The jhampā tāla nṛtya is followed by tripuṭa nṛtya, called trīṭya nṛtya by Dāmodara :

ತೃತೀಯಾಖ್ಯೇನ ತಾಲೇನ ದ್ರುತಮಾನೇನ ಯೋ ನಟಃ |
ಯದಾಭಿನೇಯವಶಗೈಃ ಕರೈರತಿಮನೋಹರೈಃ |
ಲಾಸ್ಯಾಂಗೈರಸ್ತಿತ್ವೈಃ ಕೈಶ್ಚಿತ್ ಕಲಾಸೈರಪಿ ನೃತ್ಯತಿ |
ತದಾ ತೃತೀಯನೃತ್ಯಂ ಸ್ಯಾನ್ನೃತ್ಯಂ ವಿದ್ವತ್ ಸುಖಾನಹಮ್ || 111

It is set to tripuṭa tāla in fast tempo and to very beautiful hand poses. It also consists of the lāsyaṅgas and a few kalāsas. It is scholarly.

The addatāla nṛtya is performed to the accompaniment of singing the udgrāha etc. in slow tempo. Its dhruva portion has some beautiful hand poses. This dance appeals to the lay men :

ಅದ್ಧ ತಾಲೇನ ತಾಲೇನ ಯದೋದ್ಧಾಹಾದಿ ಧಾತುಷು |
ಗೀಯಮಾನೇಷು ನೃತ್ಯೇಯುಃ ವಿಲಂಬಿತಲಯಾಶ್ರಯಮ್ |
ಗೀಯಮಾನೇ ಧ್ರುವೇ ಕೈಶ್ಚಿತ್ ಕರೈರತಿಮನೋಹರೈಃ |
ತದಾಡ್ಧ ತಾಲನೃತ್ಯಂ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕಮನೋಹರಮ್ || 112

110. *Idhem., op. cit.*, Manuscript in the Mss. Library of Sri Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts, Mysore. This description is followed by an example in nattuvāṅgam set to cka tāla.

111. Dāmodara, Catura —, *op. cit.*, VII, 229, 230, p. 221.

112. *Ibid*, VII, 231, 232, p. 221.

Lastly, the ekatālī nṛtya is performed to the song type called ekatālī in fast tempo, interspersed with bhramarī movements containing cālanikās. During the concluding ālāpa of this song which has a kalāsa, lāsyaṅgas are displayed. The dance is full of variety and appeals to the common man :

ಏಕತಾಲ್ಯಭಿಧೇ ಗೀತೇ ಗೀಯಮಾನೇ ಯದಾ ಧ್ರುವಮ್ |
ಮಧ್ಯೇ ಮಧ್ಯೇ ಭ್ರಮರಿಕಾಪ್ರಯೋಗಂ ಚಾಲಿಸಿಕಾಸ್ತಿತಮ್ |
ಗೀತಕಲಾಸೇನಾಲಾಪಂ ಲಸಲ್ಲಾಸ್ಯಾಂಗಸಂಯುತಮ್ |
ವಿವಿಧಂ ನರ್ತನಂ ಕುರ್ವಾವೇಕತಾಲ್ಯಮಗಂ ಯದಾ |
ನೃತ್ಯಂ ವಿಚಿತ್ರತಯಾ ರೀತ್ಯಾ ತದಾ ಜನಮನೋಹರಮ್ || 113

It may be noted that Dāmodara associates only men with the sulādi dance and it follows the same chronological order as of the sulādi tālas. He calls this the *suddha-paddhati* to distinguish it from folk dance varieties such as the cindu, kaṭṭarī, ālāpa, daru, vaipota, bandha, kalpa, jakkari, goṇḍalī, perani etc., which he calls *deśī* nṛtyas. Thus the sulādi dance had attained a classical status in the early 17th century A.D. Dāmodara is not, however, alone in describing this dance. Veda, who freely drew upon Dāmodara for the dance chapter in his Saṅgīta-makaranda (which came to be regarded as an important authority for dance in the 18th and 19th centuries A.D.) and who was the pupil of Ananta, Dāmodara's son, also describes it :

ಕೃತಾ ವಾಗ್ಗೇಯಕಾರ್ಯಸ್ತು ಯೇ ಗೀತಾಃ ಸೂಚತಾಲತಃ |
ತೇಷಾಂ ಭಾವಾನುಸಾರೇಣ ನೃತ್ಯಂ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯತಃ |
ಸೂದಾದಿ ಗೀತನೃತ್ಯಂ ತತ್ ಕಥಿತಂ ಪೂರ್ವಸೂರಿಭಿಃ || 114

113. *Ibid*, VII, 233, 234, p. 221.

114. Veda, Saṅgītamakaranda, *extr.* Ramakrishna Kavi, *op. cit.*, p. 737.

Devannabhaṭṭa states that the *suḷādi nṛtya* was well rooted in theory and practice in his days, but that the *naṭṭuvāṅga* etc. had not obtained the rigidity of archaism:

ವಿವರಣೆ ತ್ವಂ ರವತ್ರಯಂ ಇತರಾಲಾಪನಾಂಚ ಖಂಡಶ್ಚ ಶಬ್ದಶೃಂಗಾರಾನ್
ಜ್ಞಾತವ್ಯಾಃ ; ಶೃಂಘಮಸ್ತು ರಭಯೋನ್ಮೋಚ್ಯತೇ ಅನಿಯಮಾಚ್ಚ |
ಗೀತಶಬ್ದೇತಿ ಸೂತ್ರೋಯಂ ಸರ್ವಲೋಕೇಷು ಸಮ್ಮತಃ |
ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಲಕ್ಷಣಯೋಚ್ಚವಸಂ ವಿಕೇಷಾಂ ಹಿ ನಿರೂಪಣಮ್ | 115

Tulaja, who has based the (unpublished) dance chapter of his *Saṅgītasārāmṛta* prominently on Devannabhaṭṭa, also describes the *suḷādi nṛtya*¹¹⁶. It is therefore clear that the *suḷādis* have had a firm tradition and history in both music and dance in Karnataka and other parts of South India. The potentiality of the *suḷādis* for dance is obvious in their remarkable rhythmic variety and temporal structure. It is indeed probable that the 'nartana sevā' of the *haridāsas* was conducted to the accompaniment of *suḷādi* singing. Unfortunately little of this tradition appears to have been preserved pure today.

XI. UGĀBHOGA

It is remarkable that this compositional form, which must have had a history of at least five centuries, does not find even a mention in any of our musicological treatises. Nor is there a reference to this term in any Dravidian literature until recently. It should be noted that Purandaradāsa does not use this term anywhere in his songs whereas he recognizes the term *suḷādi*¹¹⁷.

115. Devannabhaṭṭa, *op. cit.*, Ms. loc. cit.

116. Tulaja, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. xxiv *et passim*.

The meaning of the term *ugābhoga* is as obscure as its origin. Many fanciful attempts are in evidence to confer both an antiquity and a rational meaning to it. But it must be admitted that these are singularly unsuccessful. Traditional belief, unsupported by etymological and other similar considerations, holds that *suḷādi* is derived from *suḷuhu-hādi* i.e., path to the perception of God.¹¹⁷ Similarly, *ugābhoga* has been distorted into *yugābhoga*, meaning the enjoyment of the merger with God. Krishna Rao decomposes the term into *uk-ābhoga*, meaning verbal expression of all human experience.¹¹⁸ Mugali opines that the word *ugābhoga* is a phonetic deterioration of *udgrāha-ābhoga*, two of the melodic elements of song.¹¹⁹ Both these authors have based their musicological views on those of Hulaguru Krishnacharya¹²⁰. This derivation is entirely unacceptable, for it is the most basic tenet of compositional technique that the *dhruva* is an indispensable part of a song. In fact, it derives its name for this reason. The very Sārṅgadeva on whom these authors depend for their definition states that the *dhruva* is so called because it is a permanent part of any song:

ಧ್ರುವತ್ಯಾಚ್ಚ ಧ್ರುವಃ | 121

Then how could the *ugābhoga* consist of only the *udgrāha* and *ābhoga*? It may be recalled that the *suḷādi* also consists mainly of these parts, with an optional, but exclusive use of the *antarā*. It definitely excludes the

117. Krishna Rao, K.M., *Srī Jagannāthadāsaru*, p. 345.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

119. Mugali, R. S., *Kannada Sāhityacaritre*, pp. 299, 300.

120. Krishnacharya, Hulaguru—, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

121. Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, IV, 9, p. 205.

melāpaka; the dhruva is no distinct part of the song. Even then, the first segment of the udgrāha is styled by courtesy as dhruva to conform to this all important principle and these sālaga sūdas are defined as tridhātuka, or, if they also contain the antarā, caturdhātuka. Hence such derivation is invalid, however easy or attractive. Krishnacharya further states that the ugābhoga existed even before the 12th century A.D., being set to the 120 deśī tālas and to the five mārṅa tālas. According to him, it was sung in slow tempo; it was sung in kannāḍa since 1200 A.D. and was propagated in North India by Gopālanāyaka. He equates it to the ṭhāyi and even to the khyāl of North Indian music! All this must be emphatically refuted as purely conjectural. There is not a shred of evidence, textual, traditional or empirical, to support any of these wild guesses which are dogmatically asserted as proven facts. The definitions and descriptions of the sthāyāvāḡa which came to be later known as ṭhāya and of the melodic element called āsthāyi in North Indian musical compositions clearly make it impossible to correlate them, let alone equate the ugābhoga to the khyāl. Beluru Keshavadāsa is similarly guilty of uncritical enthusiasm. His interpretations of the terms udgrāha etc. of a song are directly opposed to every textual definition, convention, practice and usage. He holds that the ugābhoga is anibaddha sākshara rāḡālapṭi¹²². Mugali again endorses these views¹²³. It may be pointed out that the use of the term ugābhoga is found only in late manuscripts of

122. Keshavadāsa, Beluru-, Haridāsa Sāhityavimarśe, pp. 18, 19.

123. Mugali, R. S., *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

haridāsa literature. Extant evidence leads to the inescapable conclusion that both origin and meaning of the term are indeterminate at present.

The ugābhoga is sung today much as the kannāḍa counterpart of the śloka or like bhāratavācana, i.e., gamaka. The literary theme is varied but is predominantly religious, ritual, spiritual, divine praise etc. It consists of a simple and short theme in one or more sentences. It is often prose, though occasionally one comes across a prosodial structure and poetic characteristics. It is not associated with any specific rāḡa or rāḡas, nor with any particular mode of rendering either in form or music. It is usually sung in a single rāḡa.

The origin of the musical form of the ugābhoga is unambiguously seen in the sālaga sūdas which were, as has been shown above, the forerunners of the sulādis. Thus in the rāsaka prabandha, an *ex tempore* elaboration of the music and of the words was prescribed in the body of the song. If the first of the two segments in the udgrāha had such ālāpa, it was called nanda rāsaka. Depending on whether the ālāpa occurred at the beginning, middle or end of the dhruva pada, the rāsaka was called kambuja, varada and vinoda respectively.¹²⁴ That the ālāpa was applied to the words in udgrāha and the dhruva is clear, because in the ekatālī prabandha Sārṅgadeva specifically prescribes an aksharavarjita ālāpa prior to the udgrāha in the variety called vipulā and calls such nirakshara ālapṭi, *prayoga*. The variety called candrikā,

124. Sārṅgadeva, *op. cit.*, IV, 352-356, p. 341.

on the other hand, has an ālāpa in words in the antarā.¹²⁵ It is obvious that these ālāpti portions attained an independent status in course of time and emerged from the body of the sulādis as a distinct compositional type and left the sulādis more compact. In this sense, the ugābhogas are as old as the sālaga sūda prabandhas.

Basavaraju, then, is wrong when he asserts that Purandaradāsa and other haridāśas imitated the vīraśaiva saints or derived inspiration from them to model the ugābhogas on the vacanas.¹²⁶ In fact, the reverse possibility is considerable. His claim that the vacanas, mantragopyas etc. were an integral part of what we regard as Karnataka music today is also unacceptable. It must be noted that in the hundreds of musical treatises of South India which were composed with the expressed purpose of describing contemporary music, not a single reference is to be found which may, even by a stretch of imagination, be construed or interpreted as distinctly vīraśaivite contribution, much less a reference to the vacana, śataka, kālajñāna, aṣṭaka, tārāvalī etc. These were at best chants to the accompaniment of drone, drum or lute. It is significant that even the Saṅgītaratnākara, written by the fervent śaiva, Śārṅgadeva, which describes or mentions many a folk-musical form in the 13th century A.D., does not make even a passing reference to any of the above in the very period which is the acme of vīraśaivite musicological activity. Nor does the foremost vīraśaivite exponent of this age, Pāṅkuriki Somanātha, a great musicologist himself, mention any of these or the other

125. *Ibid.*, IV, 356-361, pp. 341, 342.

126. Basavaraju, L., *Śivadharmatāñjali*, Introduction, p. 104.

so called song forms as sung at least by his own vīraśaivite heroes, notwithstanding the fact that his descriptions abound with an astonishing wealth of musicological information of great value. The terms vacana, hāḍu, gīte etc. must therefore be accepted only in the most liberal sense of anything chanted or recited. Similarly, his claim¹²⁷ that the songs of the haridāśas were also called vacanas and that these were set to prosody, tālas and rāgas to be later called 'svarapada' or 'svaravacana' should be set aside as a result of loyalty and enthusiasm. His criticism of Halagatti and Mugali¹²⁸ is unjust and unnecessarily harsh. No data of the chronology of his source materials are available in his otherwise scholarly work; even assuming that these are about two or three hundred years old, the mention of rāga and tāla for compositions in them does not necessarily prove that these ascriptions obtained at the origin of the archetypes or of these forms. A detailed examination of his other musicological claims is beyond the scope of the present work.

The ugābhoga may, then, be summarized as a piece of sāhitya of a usually religious theme which is displayed in a more or less *ex tempore* musical background and essentially liturgical in importance, rather than musical. It took its birth as a part of the sulādis, but later—probably in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. when the sulādis themselves culminated and settled into their present form—emerged as a distinct entity. Whatever

127. *Ibid.*, P. 82.

128. *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.

the origin or history, it is a beautiful musical form and unique to its motherland, Karnataka.

XII. PLACE IN KARNATAKA MUSIC

The foregoing discussion adequately establishes that the *suḷādi* and the *ugābhoga* are distinct and unique contributions of Karnataka to Indian music. The *suḷādi* as well as its namesake dance are unique and specific in their form. These were quite prominently popular till recent times in the whole of South India and in other regions where Karnataka rulers, musicians, composers or musicologists flourished. The *suḷādis* and *ugābhogas* have irrigated the cultural soil of the country with the perennial and sweet flow of devotion, ethics and social reformation and have indeed become popular vehicles of ideological thought. Whatever their original purpose and scope, they have come to stay as forms of classical music retaining their appeal and application to the masses.

The *haridāsas* of Karnataka are undoubtedly the largest single group of composers and singers who have contributed most to the healthy and all-sided development of our music. They have, in fact, anticipated the formal and theoretical trends of modern classical Karnataka music by at least three centuries and have laid firm foundations for such trends. They have, like *Vyāsarāya*, preserved ancient forms of our songs and initiated new ones; like his worthy disciple *Purandaradāsa*, given the initial exercises in practical music training. They all have given us new musical forms like the *vṛttanāma*, *guṇḍakriyā*, etc. They developed the *suḷādi* and *ugābhoga*

into their present state and status. They gave us the *māyāmājavagauḷa* as the initial pedagogical musical scale. They gave us the *devaranāma* or *pada* which is the archetype of the song type to-day called the *kṛtī*.

Above all, they gave us glimpses of God, of beauty and poetry in music and literature. They have made us better men.

XIII. CONCLUSION

The present work was inspired by the author's desire to bring to light at least some of the beauty and importance of the *suḷādis* and *ugābhogas*. It is an unfortunate fact that these songs are not preserved in their original form even in their motherland. It is high time that concerted and concentrated effort is made by our musicologists and musicians to restore to them their rightful place on our modern musical platforms. This involves much research, reconstruction and interpretation.

Foremost in this work is the critical edition of the texts of the *suḷādis* from all authentic extant primary and secondary sources. The search for these materials must at least now be united, coordinated and intensified. In addition to their search in traditional *haridāsa* families, orthodox *mādhva* *brāhmaṇa* families, *mādhva* mutts, Research Institutes and Manuscripts Libraries, etc., the following sources are also worthy of mention: the saint *Tyāgarāja*'s collections of songs, now partly deposited at the *Saurāshṭra Sabhā*, *Madhurai*, as well as other places of deposit or ownership. It is established from the

saint's biography that he was exposed to the considerable influence of the songs of the haridāsas of Karnataka particularly of Purandaradāsa, including ugābhogas and sulādis sung daily by both his parents. A collection and edition of these songs would authenticate the text and, tradition of at least two centuries. A second source is Tulaja's collections, preserved and enlarged by Sarabhoji. These are deposited in the Saraswathi Mahal Library of Tanjore. They give us a living tradition of some three centuries. It is a fortunate circumstance that hundreds of sulādis are preserved in authentic, if not original, music in at least five palm leaf manuscripts here¹²⁹. Yet another, little noticed by musicologists, is a palm leaf manuscript in the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore. This is shown in the Institute's descriptive catalogue of kannada manuscripts as K 570¹³⁰. The manuscript has been called 'Āyata sulādigālu'. This title was wrongly and arbitrarily conferred by perhaps the original owner and misleads one to believe at first sight in the existence of a special class of sulādis called āyata sulādis. The manuscript is unique in that it gives in its first half, ālāpana in notation in all its stages such as āyata (āyitta), sthāyi, etc., etc. (hence its title!) in a very clear and detailed manner for some sixty rāgas in a tradition which is at least two hundred and fifty to three hundred years old. Hence it is of inestimable value in reconstructing the actual practice of medieval

129. Descriptive numbers 10906 to 10910 inclusive, A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Saraswathi Mahal Library, Tanjore, Vol. XVI, pp. 7330, 7331.

130. Kannada Hastapratigāḥa Varnāṭmaka Sūcī, Oriental Research Institute Mysore, Vol. I, P. 133.

Karnataka music. The latter half of the manuscript contains the text of a large number of sulādis with the name of the rāga given at the beginning. The lakshyas and melas for these rāgas are given in the first half of the manuscript. I hope to be able to edit and publish the contents of this manuscript in the future.

The All Karnataka Purandaradāsa's Fourth Centenary Celebrations Committee of Dharwar deserve the appreciation and gratitude of every one interested in our music, literature and culture. They have been doing the much needed and long neglected work of collecting all available sources of dāsa sāhitya and publishing the critical edition of Purandaradāsa's songs in text. The critical and scrupulously detailed, accurate and honest scholarship as well as patience and devotion of its editors, Sri Huchcha Rao Bengeri and Sri Betageri Krishna Sharma command our respect, admiration and emulation.

I thank the All Karnataka Purandaradāsa's Fourth Centenary Celebrations Committee, Dharwar, for commanding me to offer my humble but sincere homage to Sri Purandaradāsa and other saints of the haridāsakūṭa.

SULADIS AND UGĀBHOGAS OF KARNĀṬAKA MUSIC

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